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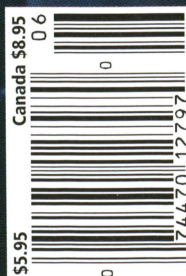
JUNE 2001

American Cinematographer

MOULIN ROUGE
A SWINGING SPECTACLE

TOMB RAIDER
BRINGS LARA CROFT TO LIFE

PLUS: THE MUMMY RETURNS
ANGEL EYES
ASC AND ACADEMY AWARDS





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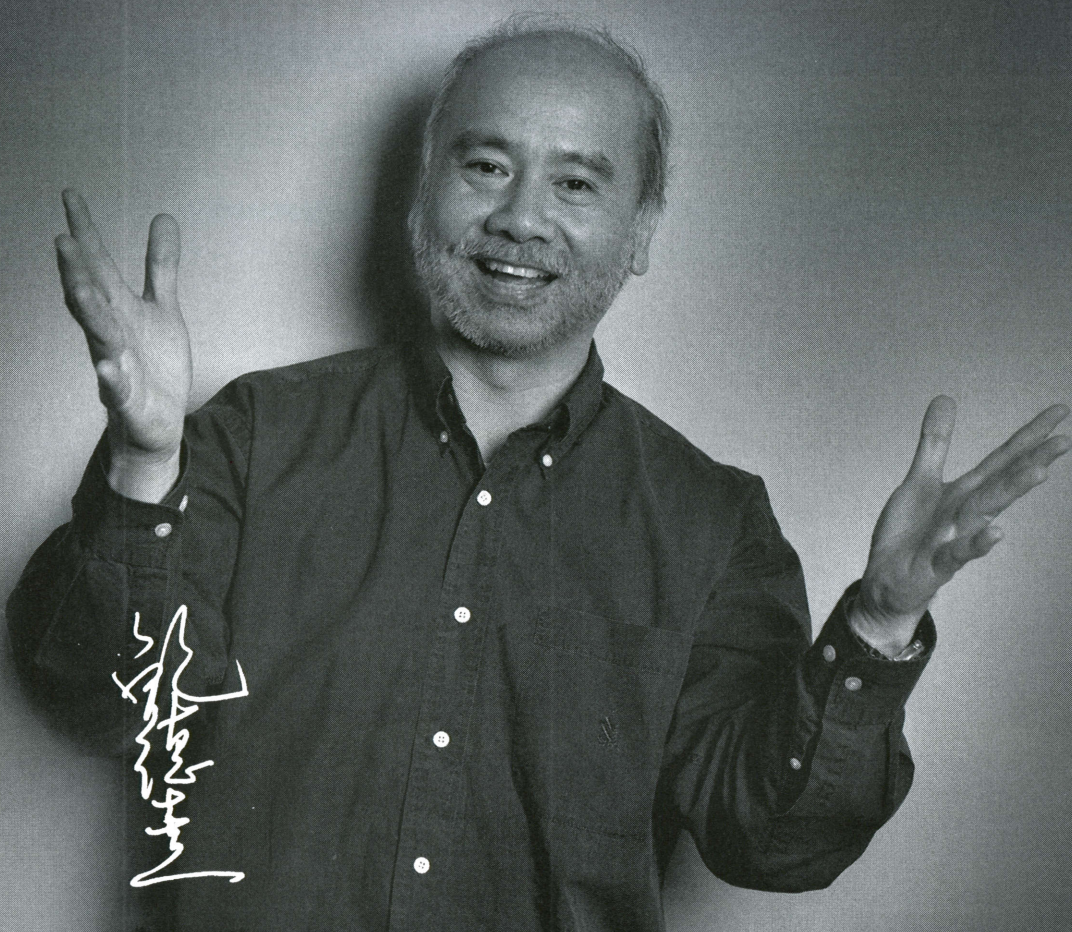
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PETER PAU, HKSC

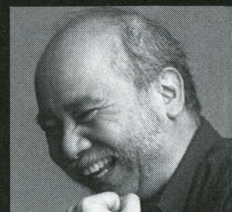
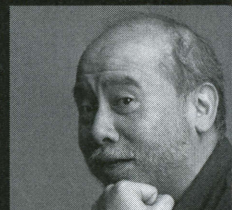
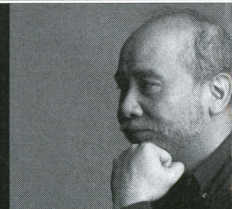
ONFILM

"Success doesn't come from heaven. You have to struggle to do good work. I try to learn something from every film I shoot but one thing you can't learn from experience is ability. Cinematography is like poetry in that no two people express themselves in exactly the same way. I don't consider myself a director of photography. I think of myself as a filmmaker. I'm also a teacher. I want to be free to offer my ideas. In *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* we decided to avoid the cliché of shooting at very low or high angles because we wanted the action to be more intimate at eye level or just a little lower. That way, instead of observing the action, the audience becomes part of it. There are no language barriers with film. You can touch the audience and make them feel what the story is about even though they have to read subtitles."

Peter Pau, HKSC earned an Oscar® for cinematography for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. His credits include *Dracula 2000*, *Bride of Chucky*, *Anna Magdalena*, *The Bride with White Hair* and many films made in Hong Kong.

All these films were shot on Kodak motion picture film.

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American Cinematographer

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Features

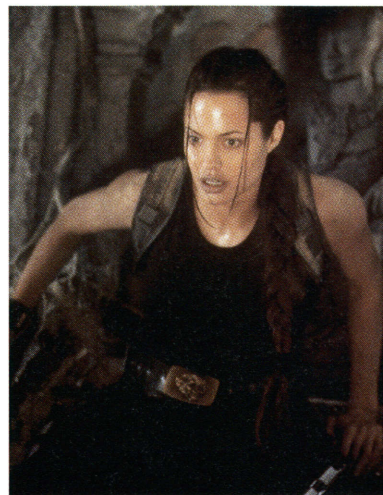
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On Our Cover: Satine (Nicole Kidman), a seductive performer and courtesan, perches on a trapeze in *Moulin Rouge*, a dazzling, experimental musical directed by Baz Luhrmann and shot by Donald McAlpine, ASC, ACS (photo by Sue Adler, courtesy of 20th Century Fox).

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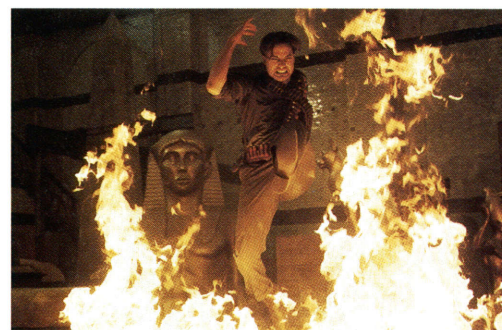
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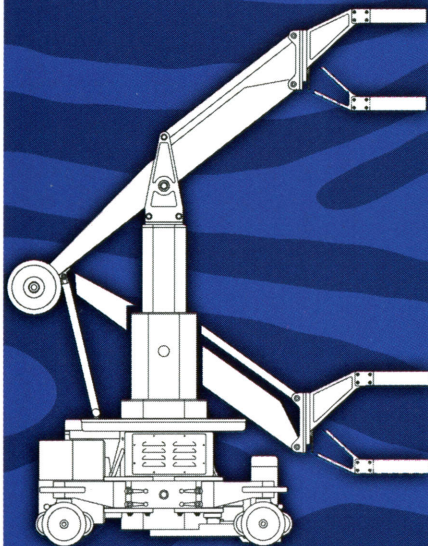


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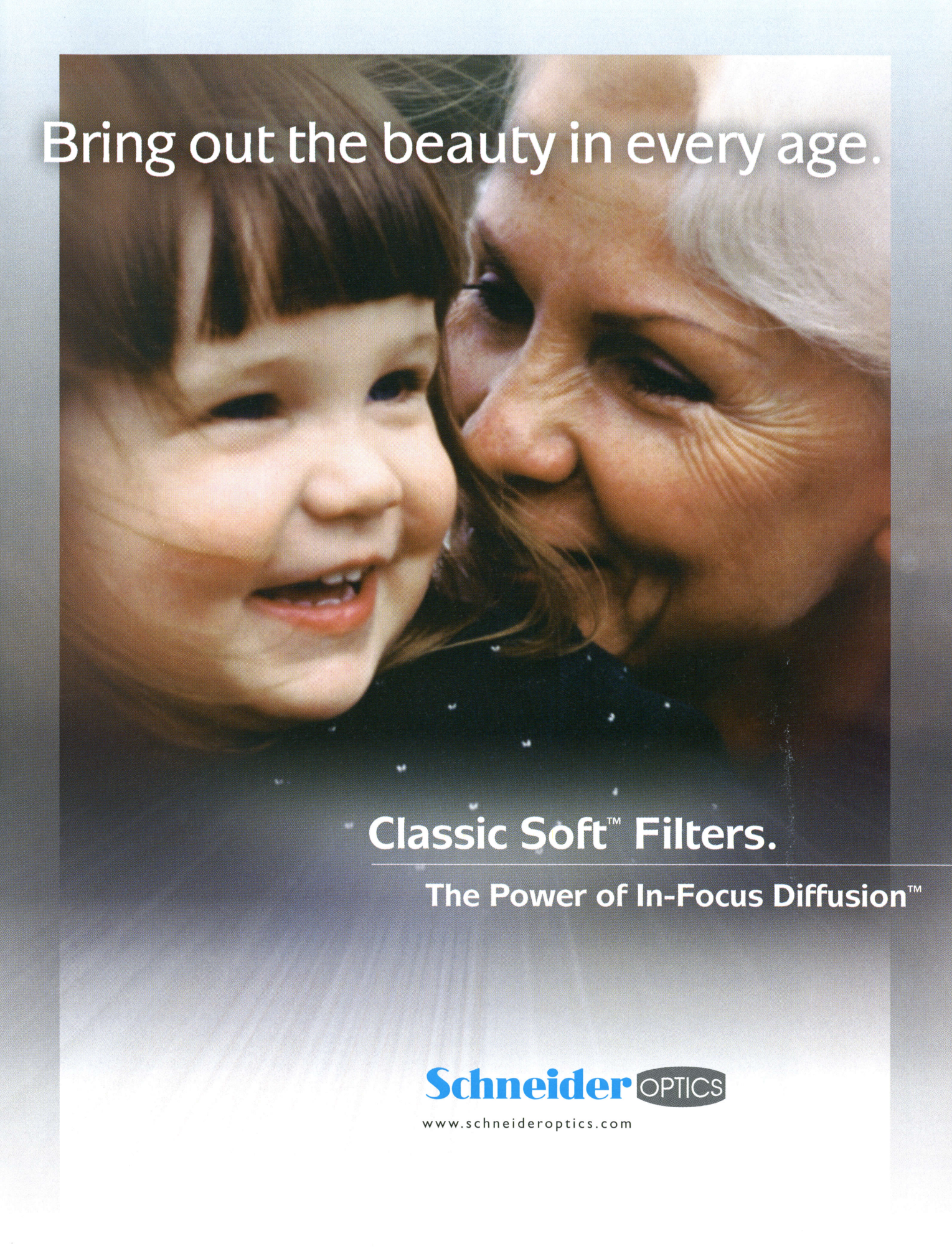
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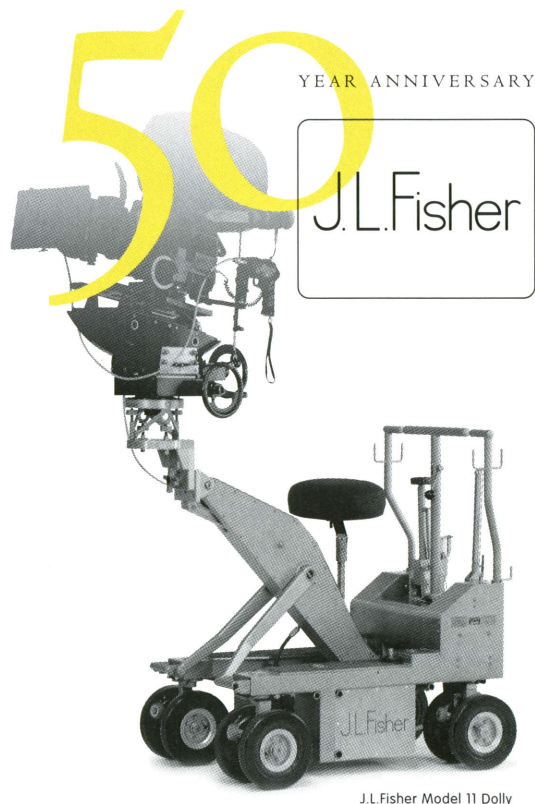
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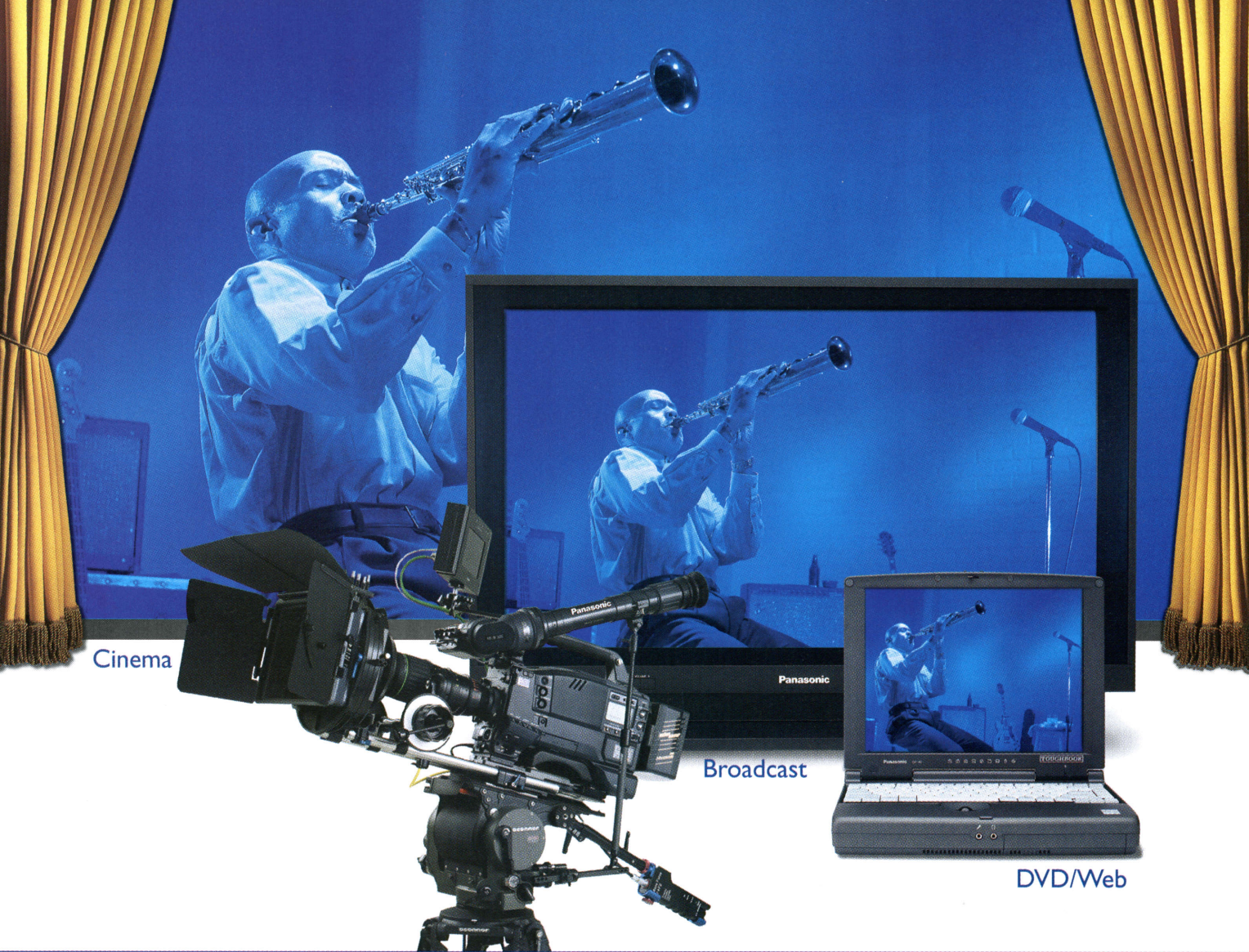
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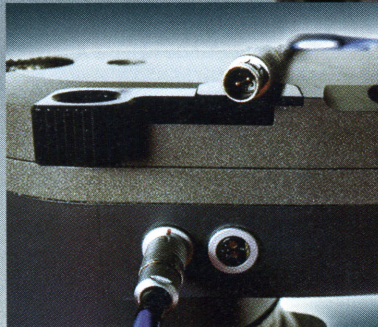
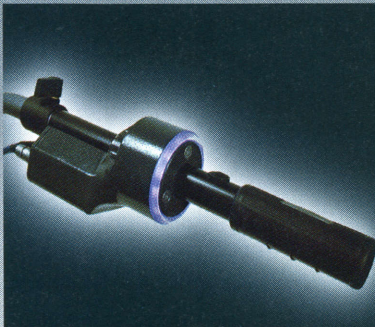
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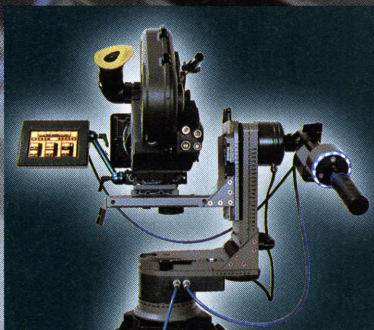
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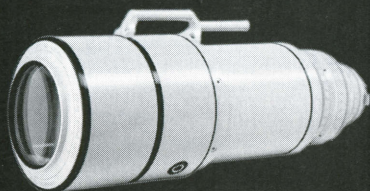
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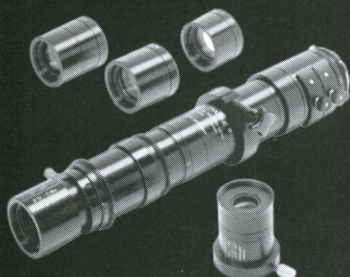
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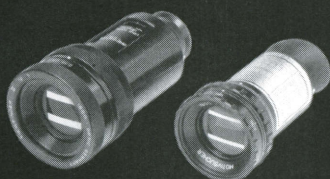
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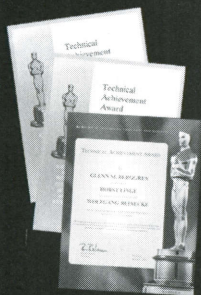
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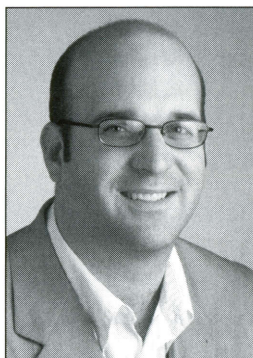
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Editor's Note



The movie musical, a genre that has long seemed out of step with the modern zeitgeist, may experience a renaissance if *Moulin Rouge* has some kick at the box office. Directed by Baz Luhrmann and shot by Don McAlpine, ASC, ACS, this ambitious, adventurous and visually sumptuous production puts a decidedly postmodern spin on the form, blending a period setting and spectacular dance numbers with a contemporary soundtrack that features songs by artists such as The Beatles, The Police, Madonna and U2. In her interview with Mr. McAlpine and key crew members ("Bohemian Rhapsody," page 38), *AC* senior

editor Rachael Bosley deconstructs this lavish spectacle, which involved some major lighting challenges.

Since this is our "summer blockbuster" issue, we couldn't resist digging for details on *Tomb Raider*, the live-action debut of videogame icon Lara Croft (portrayed in human form by the equally plucky and voluptuous Angelina Jolie). In addition to gleaning insights from cinematographer Peter Menzies, Jr. and director Simon West ("Wonder Woman," page 52), we managed to procure lighting charts from several key sets.

Tombs are also the hot spots in *The Mummy Returns*, the sequel to the hit 1999 film about Imhotep, an Egyptian ruler who springs back to life in a truly cantankerous mood after his sacred burial spot is desecrated. In two separate pieces, cinematographer Adrian Biddle, BSC ("Unholy Ground," page 64) and director Stephen Sommers ("A Saharan Sojourn," page 74) sift through the sands of their experience.

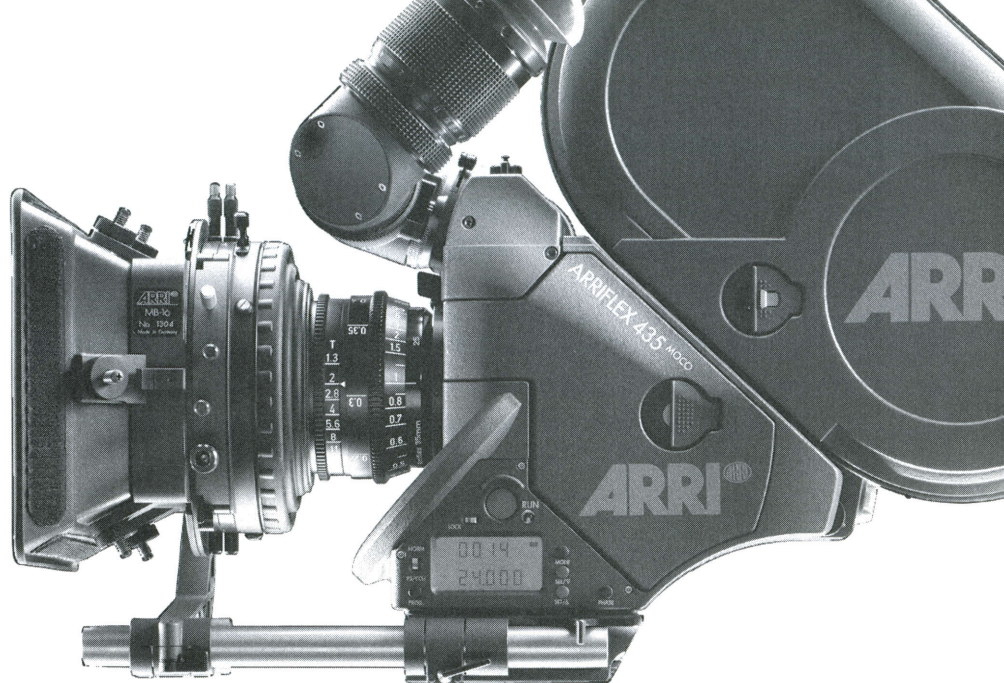
Our coverage of *Angel Eyes*, a new thriller starring Jennifer Lopez and Jim Caviezel, has unfortunately become a final salute to brilliant cinematographer Piotr Sobocinski, who passed away on March 26 at the tragically young age of 43. In "Memory and Loss" (page 80), Toronto-based writer Mark Dillon presents one of the last interviews conducted with the Oscar-nominated cameraman.

This issue also profiles the six cinematographers who were recently nominated for both Academy and ASC Awards ("Images for the Ages," page 90). Since *AC* has already covered four of the six in detail, we reserved extra space for new pieces on Caleb Deschanel, ASC (*The Patriot*) and Lajos Koltai, ASC (*Malena*). In addition, the winners of the Academy's Scientific and Technical Awards can be found in this month's installment of Production Slate (page 22), which also features an incisive article on the compelling new documentary *startup.com*.

Sincerely,

Stephen Pizzello, Executive Editor
e-mail: stephen@theasc.com

ARRI congratulates



Peter Pau

On receiving the Academy Award for Best Cinematography for

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Roger Deakins

On his fourth Academy Award Nomination for Best Cinematography for

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Congratulations, Peter and Roger, from all of us at ARRI.



Global Village

Japan's *Eureka*: A Widescreen Revelation

by Patricia Thomson



Top: The few survivors of a bloody public-bus hijacking try to heal themselves by taking a road trip a few years later in the Japanese film *Eureka*. **Bottom:** A young girl (Aoi Miyazaki) who survives the attack, along with her brother, is soon orphaned.

Long before *Eureka* coalesced into a story idea, Japanese writer/director Shinji Aoyama and cinematographer Masaki Tamra knew that they wanted to shoot the film in anamorphic. "The format and content of a film should match, but that was not why we selected [anamorphic]," admits the 61-year-old Tamra, a veteran of 36 films. "Aoyama and I had just had enough of the format of the past titles we had worked on together." These included Aoyama's 1995 directorial debut *Helpless*, as well as *Shady Grove* (1999), *Roji-E* (2000), and the upcoming *Desert Moon*. "When we were shooting *Roji-E*, we had a casual chat, saying, 'If we have a new project to work on together, let's do it in [anamor-

phic] and black-and-white,' but there was no specific reason."

Eureka turned out to be so far out of the ordinary that it's like a small miracle in a profane world. Running more than 3 ½ hours, the film is epic in length, but its story is largely interior, a mesmerizing meditation on the incremental process of healing after a life-altering trauma. Inspired by the Sarin gas attack in the Tokyo subway and the rise of violent crime in Japan, *Eureka* begins with the bloody hijacking of a public bus, an incident that leaves only three survivors: the bus driver and an adolescent brother and sister. The siblings are traumatized into a state of silence, and the bus driver disappears for two years.

During the film's first half, Aoyama offers oblique glimpses of the crime's ripple effect — the siblings' mother leaving the family, their father dying in a car accident, the bus driver's alienation at home and his move into the children's house, and a series of murders that follow in his wake. The trio begin to form a surrogate family, and in the second half of the film, they and a visiting cousin embark on a road trip to try to begin life anew. "In my earlier films," says the director, "I told stories that juxtaposed social misfits, each under the burden of that particular psychological baggage of post-war Japan. With *Eureka*, I add to my body of work a prayer for life and the desire to be reborn."

He also adds a picture that is distinct in its pace and look. The first thing that immediately sets *Eureka* apart is its sepia-toned, black-and-white photography. Aoyama was interested in black-and-white because "I wanted to make a film in its most elemental state."

But he also wanted to end the film with an aerial shot in full color — a stunning transition that mirrors the emotional release experienced by his characters. Aoyama therefore decided to print both film stocks — Kodak's Double X 5222 black-and-white and its color Vision 320T 5277 — on color positive film "because it was the simplest method," he says. But the young director didn't realize that this process invariably results in a print that's not pure black-and-white. "I supposed Tamra had some idea of the outcome," he notes, "but we did not aim for a sepia color. It was just an accidental product of our approach."

It's a happy accident that also gives *Eureka* a large measure of its haunting beauty, and it certainly inspired Tamra. "It was an experimental trial to test the uncontrollable coloring caused by the process," he says. "It was a really thrilling experience, because the minute tinges of color came out unexpectedly. A good print has numerous tinges." Indeed, the film shifts from a rosy sepia to something more khaki, then to a deeper walnut brown, and then to a delicate photo-album-like hue. Though arbitrary, the effect has a subliminal impact, making some locations seem dank and depressing, and others pristinely beautiful. As Tamra acknowledges, "When I saw it, normal black-and-white was no longer satisfactory."

Eureka is also marked by a cinematographic style that is both understated and balletic. Structurally, the film is composed of long, legato phrases rather than short bits. Tamra's limited use of close-ups and emphasis on the frame's internal composition evokes the work of past Japanese masters such as director

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Kenji Mizoguchi — though the cinematographer maintains that this similarity “was not something intentional.” Like Mizoguchi, however, Tamra reveals a complex but unified world with the utmost economy. In numerous scenes, he uses a single shot to follow an action that other filmmakers might break into three or more setups.

At one point, for example, the visiting cousin tries to provide some schooling to the two siblings, who have been truants since their parents’ disappearance. The scene begins with symmetrical shot of the trio, with the children seated on either side of a table and their cousin in between. The cousin draws some books out of his satchel and places them before the children. They lethargically flip through the books, and then the boy bolts out of the room in a show of protest, with the cousin in pursuit. The girl picks up a pen and huddles over her book. Meanwhile, the chase continues outside the house.

Not many cinematographers would have staged this sequence in a single shot, but Tamra does. The camera simply shifts angles, pulls back, and dollies to the adjoining room, where it peers through the window to reveal the boys running in the yard. “I am very pleased if long and fluid shots are appreciated,” says Tamra. “Scenes with short pieces are thought to be easier for the audience, but on the contrary, I think they are pushy, telling the viewer to see things this way and that.”

Similarly, the climactic scene in which the murderer is caught consists of two long, sustained shots that comprise multiple internal compositions — containing, in effect, close-ups, two-shots, and wide shots all within one beautifully choreographed motion. To make this possible, says Tamra, “my shooting style is always low-level lighting and shallow focus. I do not use any lighting equipment that will hinder the camera and actors’ motion. In this scene, it was very important to harmonize the motion and timing, just like a ballet. Toward that end, we rehearsed about 10 times and shot five or six takes.”



Cinematographer Masaki Tamra readies the camera. *Eureka* is his fifth collaboration with writer/director Shinji Aoyama.

At other times, the camera is stationary, simply observing characters deep in thought, conversing in a room, or moving through a landscape. “By showing the details of their life — simple acts like standing on their feet or sitting down on the chair in one sequence of time — I wanted to convey that they are living the same life that we do,” the director says. This methodology of describing their lives, he continues, “is the whole secret of the length of this film. I wanted to imbue the audience with the emotions of the characters.” From the director’s point of view, this was one of the most vital elements in Tamra’s manner of shooting — “making the invisible visible.”

Tamra had only worked with anamorphic once before in his long career, back in 1974. “For me, it was a relatively easy format,” he says. “Since the frame is wider, we have more information. The camera didn’t need to move. I just wanted to silently show the landscape and what the characters were doing.” The format also allowed for minimal close-ups. “In case of TV or Academy Aperture, close-up is normal, but in anamorphic it would look exaggerated,” Tamra explains. “I feel it is too pushy, as if we’re saying, ‘You have to see this and this.’ I think anamorphic and stage plays are alike in that the audience can look up close at their own discretion.”



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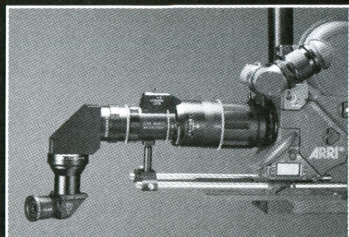
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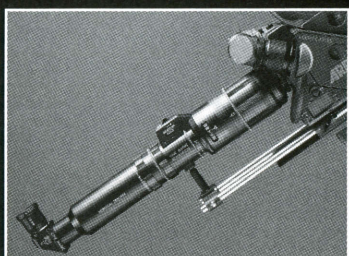
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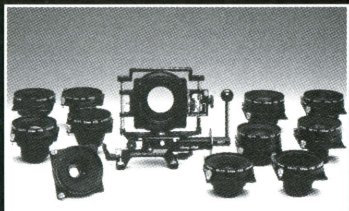
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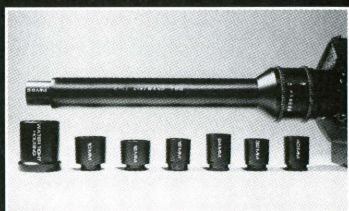
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DVD Playback

by Chris Pizzello

Lawrence of Arabia (1962)
2.20:1 (16x9 Enhanced)
Dolby Digital 5.1 and
Dolby Surround 2.0
Columbia TriStar Home Video,
\$39.95

Perhaps the ultimate testament to the visual power of David Lean's desert epic is one theatergoer's amusing observation at a revival screening some years back: as the lights went on for the intermission, hundreds of audience members nearly sprinted up the aisles toward the refreshment stand. If one of the ultimate benefits of cinema is the psychological immersion in an exotic locale the viewer would otherwise never visit, there is no film that transports an audience better than *Lawrence of Arabia*.

That said, the majesty of a film like *Lawrence* is an awkward fit for the intimate environs of the home theater. How could it not be? This is a film of grand ambition and never-equalled breadth that not only should be seen on the biggest screen possible, but *demand*s it. Despite this disclaimer, Sony's long-awaited presentation of the beautifully restored *Lawrence of Arabia* on DVD lives up to the anticipation. The transfer is excellent, without a hint of artifacts to be found on those famously clean desert panoramas framed by legendary cinematographer Freddie Young, BSC (who won an Academy Award for his work). Sharpness, color saturation and contrast are all comparable to even the most contemporary films released on DVD.

The extras provided on the disc are more of a mixed bag. The best supplement is a one-hour documentary by Laurent Bouzereau, which features insights from a number of cast and crew

members, including the late Lean (dapper and witty in a 1989 interview). A number of interesting details about the production are unearthed, such as the hellish difficulty of filming multiple takes in the desert. One can only imagine the frustration caused by an errant paper cup tumbling into the background (apparently a frequent occurrence), since every footprint in the sand would have to be completely erased before the next take. Meanwhile, cinematographer Young was forced to place a wet cloth over the camera at all times (after he discovered that the desert's broiling heat caused blotches to appear on the negative), and finished footage had to be stored in a refrigeration truck.

The documentary also reveals that there was an ulterior motive to those faraway locales: Lean apparently disliked producer Sam Spiegel so intensely that he consciously chose (and lingered in) locations that were inaccessible to the meddlesome producer. Also included is a short appreciation of the film by Steven Spielberg, which feels somewhat incomplete. Spielberg states that the film's screenplay is perhaps the finest ever written, a fair enough claim that begs a simple question: Why? Regrettably, viewers don't find out. This essential disc is rounded out by four so-so period featurettes, archival footage of the New York premiere, an interesting look at the film's advertising campaign, and a few trailers and talent files.

Do the Right Thing (1989)
1.85:1 (16x9 Enhanced),
Dolby Digital 2.0
The Criterion Collection, \$39.95

A different kind of heat informs Spike Lee's best film, 1989's *Do the Right*

CINEMATOGRAPHERS GET BEHIND CANON'S HD-EC LENSES.

Photo taken on the set of *Earth: Final Conflict*, a series that switched from film to digital cinematography.

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Thing, which remains perhaps the most honest film ever made about race relations in America. Cinematographer Ernest Dickerson, ASC took Lee's dramatic conceit for the film — 24 hours in the life of a racially mixed Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood on the hottest day of the summer — and ran with it, infusing every frame of the film with warm light and vivid, expressionistic colors.

The strategy works on two levels: to visually imply both sweltering August heat and, on a more symbolic level, the boiling "heat" of racial tension that threatens to destroy the neighborhood's charmingly rendered community. Dickerson even opted to use old-fashioned carbon-arc lights for a more realistic sunlight feel; viewers will be surprised to find out via the DVD's commentary track (to which Dickerson contributes along with Lee, production designer Wynn Thomas and Lee's sister Joie) how many of the location scenes were actually filmed on rainy days. The cinematographer, who approved the disc's beautiful transfer, also touts an initially surprising visual influence: the British films of Powell and Pressburger (photographed by Jack Cardiff, BSC), which he cites for the filmmakers' willingness to place "magical," stylized elements in the midst of basically realistic situations. It's a feel that is common to many of Lee's visually experimental films, which have always stubbornly refused to stay bound to stodgy realism.

Criterion has really gone the distance to pay tribute to *Do the Right Thing*, which was previously released on DVD by Universal in a lackluster, no-extras edition. Included is a second disc loaded with just about all the supplementary features imaginable, with each segment introduced by Lee. St. Clair Bourne's *The Making of Do the Right Thing* is a unique documentary that completely avoids the usual promotional blather, opting instead to explore the production's relationship with the Bed-Stuy neighborhood used as the film's fictional backdrop. Lee has also included some rare behind-the-scenes

footage, including an amazing look at the first time the cast gathered together to discuss their roles. Among the faces are such soon-to-be-famous performers as Samuel L. Jackson, John Turturro, Martin Lawrence and an insecure Rosie Perez, who made her film debut with this picture.

Among the rest of the supplements are the original storyboards for the film's powerful closing riot sequence, a new interview with editor Barry Brown, Lee's video for Public Enemy's song "Fight the Power," and a 1989 Cannes Film Festival press conference featuring Lee and cast members Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, Richard Edson and Joie Lee, in which some of the media's misunderstanding of Lee's open-ended film is already on display.

***Rear Window* (1954)**

1.66:1 (16x9 Enhanced),

Dolby Digital 2.0 Mono

Universal Home Video, \$29.98

A broiling summer is also the backdrop in *Rear Window*, Alfred Hitchcock's movie about those of us who go to see movies. The film's main character, Jeff (Jimmy Stewart), is a photo-journalist temporarily sidelined by a broken leg; languishing in a wheelchair within his stifling apartment, he spies on his neighbors' lives (framed in rectangular apartment windows that resemble movie screens) while doing his best to ignore his own problems, most of which concern his hot-and-cold romance with a high-society beauty (Grace Kelly). As his nurse, Stella (Thelma Ritter), warns him, "What people ought to do is get outside and look in for a change." This underlying theme — the voyeuristic impulse in all of us — makes Hitchcock's peerlessly suspenseful and much-loved classic one of his most slyly subversive works.

Photographed with consummate style by Hitchcock's longtime collaborator Robert Burks, ASC, *Rear Window* was the beneficiary of a much-needed restoration by Robert A. Harris and James C. Katz. A look at the dreadful condition of the original materials

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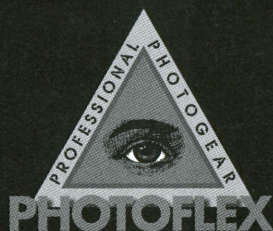
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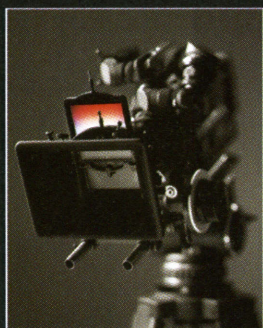
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(demonstrated in a making-of documentary on the disc) allows viewers to see what these restoration experts were up against. More than six months alone were spent on returning the film's eroded yellow layer for Kelly's legendary, looming entrance. While the film's presentation on DVD can't be labeled pristine — a lack of sharpness and excessive grain is occasionally distracting — it's still probably the best version of the film that viewers can expect. Subtle details like the glowing stub of suspected murderer Thorwald's cigarette in his pitch-black apartment are clearly rendered, and the colors of visual elements like the orange twilight sky and the red brick of the adjacent buildings are surprisingly rich.

For extras, there is an excellent Laurent Bouzereau documentary, *Rear Window Ethics*, which is particularly interesting when it delves into the brilliant set design of the apartment courtyard. (Art directors were forced to literally cut the floor out of Paramount's Stage 18 to extend the apartment set downward when it didn't go quite as high as Hitchcock had specified.) One also has to admire the thoroughness of any documentary that takes the effort to track down the original Miss Torso (Georgine Darcy). Also included is a fond remembrance of Hitchcock's working methods by screenwriter John Michael Hayes, who was given the enviable assignment of spending a full week with actress Kelly in order to tailor her character to her real personality. Elsewhere are a gallery of production still photos, a pair of highly entertaining trailers, production notes and cast bios. ■

Next Month in DVD Playback:

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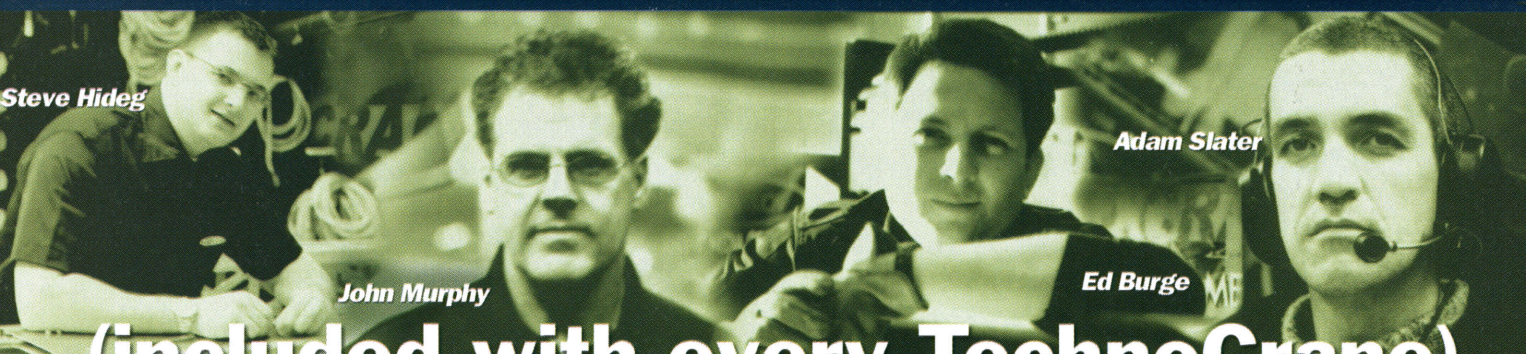


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Production Slate

A Tangled Web and Sci-Tech Winners

Kaleil Isaza Tuzman appears on national television to promote his fledgling Internet site, Govworks.com.



Internet Access by Chris Pizzello

During the rollicking high of the New Economy in 1999, an upstart ruling class of cocky, charismatic and impossibly young Internet entrepreneurs inspired equal parts intrigue, annoyance and envy. Now, of course, the business page brings daily tidings of doom for the tech gurus and dot-com impresarios who not so long ago beamed confidently from the covers of *Fortune 500* and *Business Week*. Jehane Noujaim and Chris Hegedus's amazingly intimate documentary *startup.com* offers a virtual case study in how it all went so wrong so quickly, focusing on the near-Shakespearean rise and fall of the now-defunct site Govworks.com.

Fresh off a producing job at MTV's reality-based program *Unfiltered*, young filmmaker Noujaim was living in New York City in 1998 and debating whether

to return to her native Egypt to start her first documentary project. She realized, however, that a remarkable and timely story was unfolding right in her own apartment. Noujaim's roommate, Kaleil Isaza Tuzman, a classmate of hers from Harvard, was quitting his \$400,000-a-year job at investment firm Goldman Sachs to start an Internet company with a noble but untested concept: allowing citizens to interact directly with their local governments via a revolutionary new Web site.

"The energy of the dot-com world was the same sort of energy I felt when I quit my own job at MTV," Noujaim explains. "I wanted to do my own film, even if it meant that I had to use up all of my savings. It was inspiring to me to see Kaleil leave a \$400,000-a-year job to start this company with his friends. It was an amazing period when people were dropping out of business school, law school and really great jobs because

so much money was being given out to pursue any idea, provided it made some kind of sense. These guys were the rock stars of our time."

Using a Sony VX-1000 miniDV camera she'd acquired with the help of a Harvard grant, Noujaim began following her roommate around during his initial steps to start Govworks.com. Ironically, veteran documentarian Chris Hegedus was also searching around New York at the same time for a story involving the dot-com explosion. Together with her husband and partner D.A. Pennebaker, Hegedus has worked on some of the most acclaimed documentary projects of recent times, including *The War Room* (which was nominated for a 1994 Academy Award; see *AC* Jan. '94), *Moon Over Broadway*, *The Energy War*, *DeLorean* and *Depeche Mode 101*.

"I was really fascinated by the Internet, although I didn't know too much about it," says Hegedus. "I met a friend who was a consultant at a New York venture-capital firm called Flatiron Partners, which was funding a lot of the early startups. He told me how wild it was, with kids in their twenties coming in to make pitches and getting millions of dollars. I started sitting in on some of the pitch meetings, trying to find an entrepreneur to follow, and figured I'd follow the story from the venture-capital side also because they were good characters."

Hegedus learned of Isaza Tuzman's company through an associate. "The company's new marketing director, who coincidentally was a friend of ours, called us up and asked if we'd be interested in directing a startup story," she

Photos courtesy of Artisan Entertainment.

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Isaza Tuzman (above) finds himself at odds with his close friend and business partner, Tom Herman (below), when their fortunes begin to fade.

says. "It's funny how many of our films tend to find *us*! I met Kaleil and instantly thought he had the kind of charisma that could carry a film, and I began immediately shooting his first pitching meeting with a new, portable Sony hi-def video camera loaned to us to try promotionally by LVR Liman Video Rental in New York. The camera was amazing, but it was clear we weren't going to be able to sustain filming in hi-def with limited finances."

Hegedus soon met Noujaim, who "had shot Kaleil leaving Goldman Sachs the night before with her miniDV camera," Hegedus recalls. The two hit it off immediately and decided to collaborate. "I felt that the access to our subject that Jehane could bring the project would outweigh any inexperience on her part, but more importantly, I felt instinctively that she really understood the type of films we do," Hegedus offers. "What's most important in a partnership is that the other person has the same vision. Compared to 16mm or the larger-format video cameras, these automatically controlled miniDV cameras almost film by themselves, so even though Jehane

may not yet have known some of the little tricks or ways you go about making these films, I felt she'd be able to learn them right away."

Since Noujaim had the video camera, she handled most of the camerawork on the project at first, while Hegedus concentrated on sound. "Once I taught Jehane about audio, I began shooting also," Hegedus says. The project's limited budget and the subjects' frequent travels occasionally demanded that both filmmakers pull double-duty.

In addition to the Sony VX-1000 (fitted with a built-in zoom lens), Hegedus bought Sony PDA-100A and Canon XL-1 DV cameras during the production, not only because of their better picture quality (the new Sony shot DV tapes rather than miniDV), but also for their better audio quality (48 sample rate). "The Canon XL-1 is wonderful because it has interchangeable lenses, but the PDA-100 is really great because it has a flip-out monitor that I initially thought I'd never use," Noujaim details. "I've always been a photographer who looks through a viewfinder, but the flip-out screen was really useful because it allowed me to make eye contact with people while we were interviewing them. I could just occasionally glance down out of the corner of my eye and check the frame."

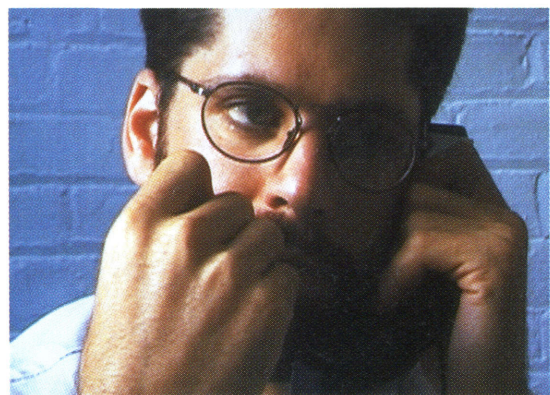
The cost-effective digital medium allowed the filmmakers to bypass some of the obstacles inherent in documentary filmmaking. "You're not changing magazines all the time, which is great," Noujaim says. "Though Chris and Penne have shot these kinds of films with big cameras forever, the fact that I could just throw the camera on my shoulder or into a backpack helped immensely. But the main [advantage] was the cost [savings] — there's no other way I could have started this project without funding."

In terms of sound, the filmmakers found the use of radio mics invaluable. "A lot of emerging filmmakers forget that sound is one of the most difficult aspects of a documentary," Hegedus comments. "Getting a lot of pictures doesn't mean that you get *the story*, especially on a project like this, which is really driven by

the audio. If at all possible, I'd put mics on whoever was in a scene, and then feed the sound to the camera. We didn't take a lot of care in hiding the mics, because a lot of times people can't be bothered with them. If we can make it look nice, that's a plus, but I usually just put the mics on a shirt or a table."

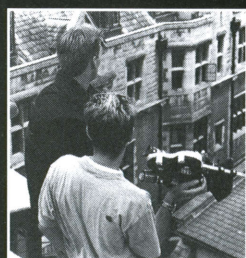
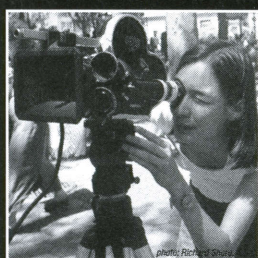
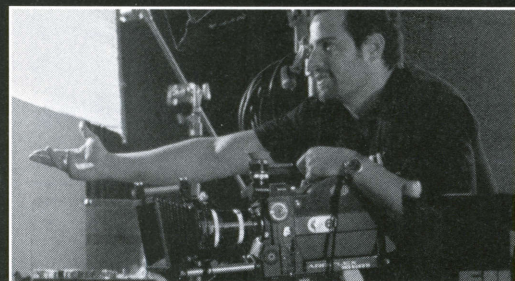
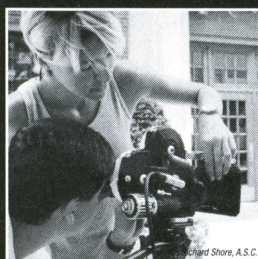
The film's early scenes follow Goworks partners Isaza Tuzman and Tom Herman (a close friend of Isaza Tuzman's since childhood) as they travel around the country to various venture-capital firms in an attempt to raise funding for their fledgling company. Not surprisingly, the filmmakers soon found that the hush-hush world of modern finance wasn't about to simply throw its doors open to documentary filmmakers. "We'd use any connection we could to get into the meetings," Hegedus recalls. "Quite often, people would know *The War Room* or D.A.'s 1967 Bob Dylan documentary *Dont Look Back*, and give us access. But sometimes they didn't, and we would just have to do what we could. For example, the venture capitalists Kaleil and Tom visited in San Francisco wouldn't let us in, but we still had a radio mic on Kaleil. The v.c. was giving them such interesting advice — advice that rang very true by the end of the film — and we figured that there must be a window somewhere. Jehane went around the building into a courtyard and found the window to the meeting room, and we wound up filming through the blinds!"

Once Goworks accrued funding and had to answer to a monolithic, never-seen board of directors, the filmmakers found their requests for access summarily denied. In an ironic twist, however, the physical absence of the board — whose reactions to events are obsessed over by Isaza Tuzman and Herman — lends the film an effectively threatening edge. "[The board] is like 'The Man,'" Noujaim comments. "Kaleil found himself under this hierarchy that he thought he was leaving when he quit Goldman Sachs — this structured, money-hungry world. [The corporate world] has become so legalistic that they don't even keep real notes in board meetings anymore,



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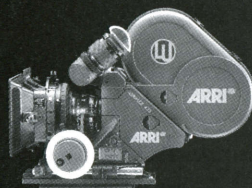
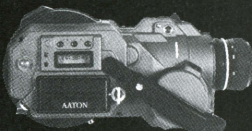
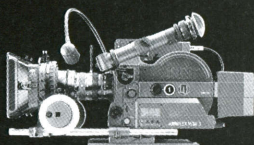
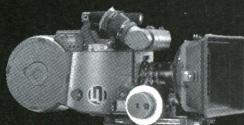
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The charismatic Kaleil attempts to rally the Govworks staff with an inspirational speech.

because they're afraid they'll get sued afterwards. They just couldn't risk not being able to have totally open conversations because of the presence of a tape lying around somewhere. Initially we thought it was awful that we couldn't get into the board meetings, but sometimes the omissions wind up working to our benefit."

As Govworks quickly grew into a huge enterprise with hundreds of employees and millions of dollars in venture-capital funding, the filmmakers realized that the most compelling aspect of the story was not the business itself, but the clear strain it was having on the friendship between Isaza Tuzman and Herman.

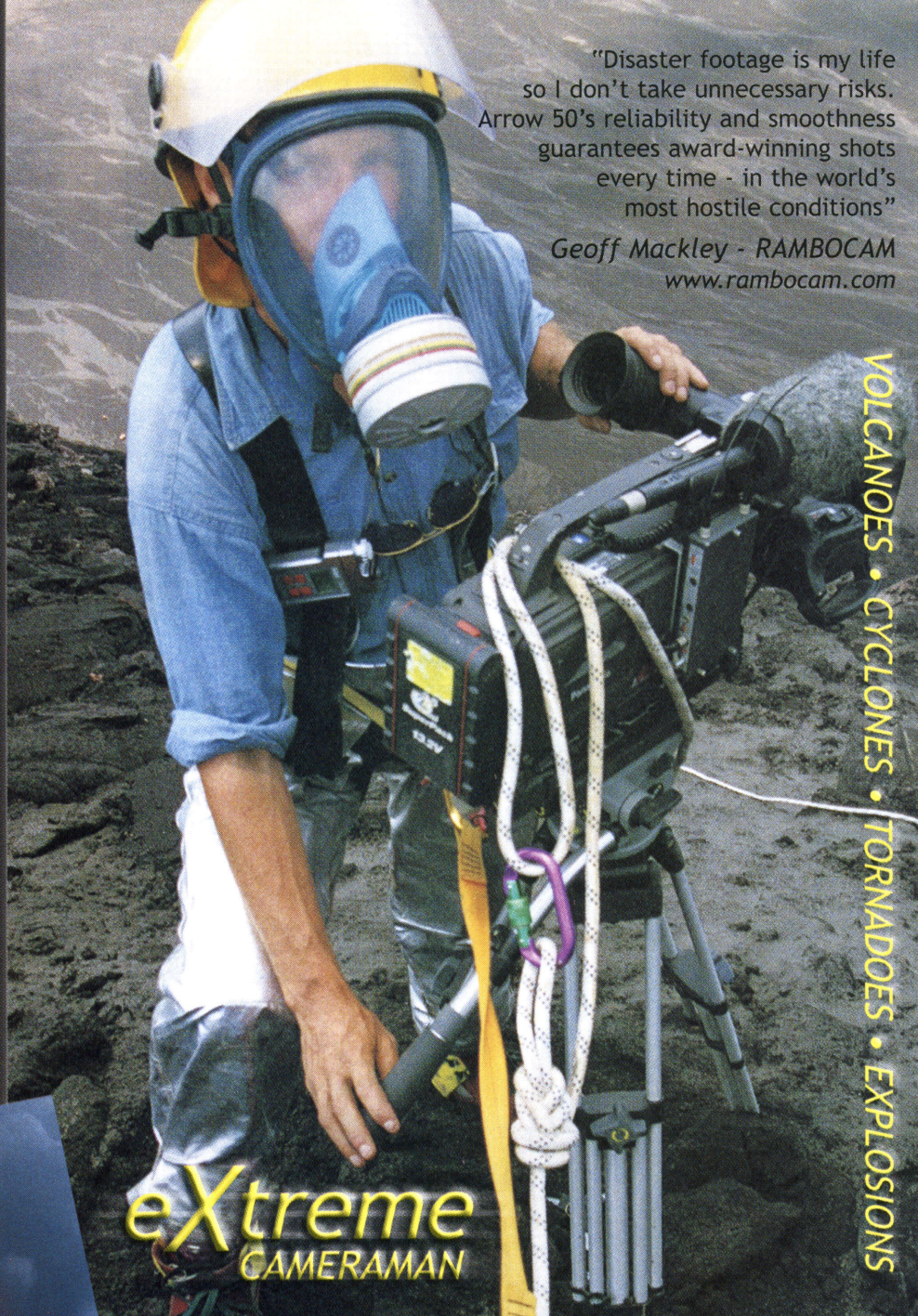
"By my nature, I never want to see things getting ugly," Hegedus says. "Our original notion was that we'd see them become millionaires, and later we'd be their friends and get invited to their mansions and swimming pools! But from the beginning, you could see that Tom and Kaleil were such opposite personalities — Tom is one of those people who say whatever is on his mind, which isn't that tactful in the business world. So I suspected that there might be some tension down the line. What they were doing was so enormous, ambitious and truly brave — 28-year-olds raising \$60 million, taking on an unknown field in technology — how could they not be a little in over their heads?"

Living in the same two-bedroom, two-bathroom apartment with Isaza Tuzman throughout the film project put Noujaim in an alternately advantageous and awkward position. "I'm not sure I would have been able to do this film had I foreseen what was going to happen," she admits. "The positive side of filming friends is that you can just stick a camera on your back and go out with them — you're working, but at the same time you're just 'hanging out.' The negative side was seeing what was happening between Kaleil and Tom, while being close friends with both of them. In many situations, as I was filming one of them I knew what the other was thinking. I felt like if I said something, I could possibly help the situation. But you can't play God because the situation is much bigger than even you know. You have to just let things play out."

The arrangement also had its lighter side. "On a personal level, I definitely found myself making decisions like not yelling at Kaleil for not doing the dishes, because there was an important meeting four hours later that I wanted to get into!" she laughs. "But when things went downhill for the company, it was really rough. Kaleil had gotten all of his friends, family and business contacts to invest in the company. On one occasion, he was sitting on our kitchen floor, and the camera was sitting on the table next to me. He was saying, 'I hope I make it to

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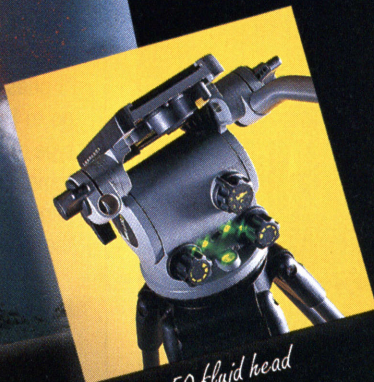
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Herman and Isaza Tuzman try to convince one of many venture-capital firms to float them some financing.

the other side — I've never felt so low in my life.' At the time, you have two heads. One is telling you, 'This is an important part of the story,' and the other is saying, 'Forget the camera and be a good friend.' I often chose to be the friend and didn't pick up the camera."

Occasionally, the subjects gave the filmmakers an assist. In one scene, Isaza Tuzman is informed that the company's main office has been ransacked in a likely case of corporate espionage. "Usually, both Tom and Kaleil were too involved in what they were doing to call up and tell us what was going on," Noujaim says. "But on that occasion, it was about 6 a.m. on a Saturday, and Kaleil knocked on my door. He said, 'Jehane, a really [terrible] thing just happened, and I know you would kill me if I didn't wake you up.'"

One of the more amusing aspects of the documentary is the gung-ho corporate behavior exhibited by the Goworks team, which extends to synchronized sloganeering and a brazen attempt to psychologically intimidate the visiting CEO of a rival dot-com. "[That aspect] was incredible to see," Hegedus admits. "I guess that's what happens when you go to Harvard Business School, but that type of behavior was totally new to me. I remember one former journalist who joined Goworks and told her husband the next day, 'I've joined a cult!'"

Despite the increased comfort factor in filming a friend, Noujaim was still careful to blend into her surround-

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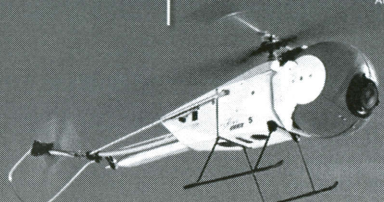
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ings and not intrude overtly on the action, particularly during one scene featuring Isaza Tuzman giving a pep talk to his employees. "He was telling his employees, 'I refuse, refuse, *refuse* to lose,'" Noujaim recalls. "It was a real heart-to-heart with the company. I was standing right in front of him, and he looked at me kind of funny. Finally, he said, 'Jehane, maybe you shouldn't film this.' I ended up walking around behind a desk and shooting the rest of his talk from there, which is why the shot is slightly far away. Sometimes you have to sacrifice getting the absolute best shot in the world. When you're giving a speech like that, you don't want to feel as if you're giving it for the benefit of a camera."

Noujaim also found that partnering with an experienced documentary like Hegedus informed her own shooting style. Late in the film, as Herman becomes increasingly alienated from the company he helped start, Noujaim frames the young executive in the shadow of the company's entrance as a wide expanse of empty street fills the right-hand side of the frame. "I was shooting really close-up on him, and Chris came up behind me and whispered, 'Get a wide shot,'" she says. "A lot of times when you're so involved with the story, there's a tendency to be right in people's faces. Having another person there is wonderful because they can see that wider shot."

startup.com also features foreshadowing worthy of an artful fictional screenplay. The dire fate of Goworks is hinted at through symbolic details that gather significance only after the film is over: at one point, Isaza Tuzman's computer "blows up" during an important meeting with a Boston venture-capital firm; at another, the lights inside the Goworks office briefly go dark as he attempts to rally his troops. "Those are things you find when you're editing," Hegedus points out. "Fifty percent of these films is made in the shooting, and the other half is made in the editing room, when you're going through the material and you have that kind of hindsight into what happened."

Adds Noujaim, "The most amaz-

ing part of making a documentary is that you see that reality is more interesting and more nuanced than anything you could possibly write. I felt incredibly lucky to be a part of it. D.A. Pennebaker told me one thing before I started: 'Just shoot until you get bored.' That's what it's all about. You just follow what you find is interesting. It's like a maze, and sometimes you find yourself at a dead end. Then you find other storylines, but after 400 hours of footage, you have to remember which parts excited you the most while you were shooting them."

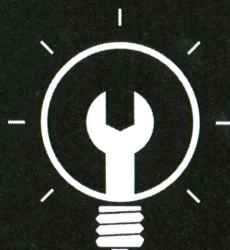
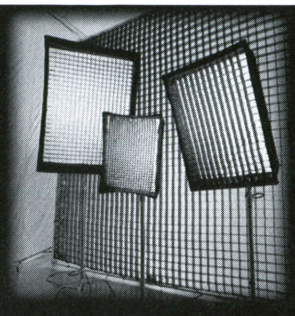
But what did the two humbled "stars" of *startup.com* think of the finished film? "Kaleil and his girlfriend, Kristin, watched it together in the apartment, and Chris and I were straining from another room to hear if they were laughing, or what," Noujaim says. "He came out afterwards and said, 'I think it's a really honest film.' Tom felt, and probably still feels, that the film [shifted to] being about two guys starting a company and their friendship, and less about how Govworks was actually created. I think it was very disappointing to him that the film didn't fully describe the company's technology and what exactly went wrong with it. It's difficult to see a year and a half of your life condensed into an hour and a half. The most difficult aspect of a documentary is not 'Why is that in there?' but 'There's so much that's not in there!'"

Technical Toasts of the Town

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences feted the wizards who work behind Hollywood's curtain at the annual Scientific and Technical Awards ceremony on Saturday, March 3, at the Regent Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Los Angeles.

The Academy presented several categories of honors, including the Gordon E. Sawyer Award, the John Bonner Medal of Commendation, Academy Commendations, the Academy Award of Merit (Oscar Statuette), the Scientific and Engineering Award (Academy Plaque) and the Technical Achievement Award (Academy Certificates). ➤

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Gordon E. Sawyer Award

This year's Sawyer Award, in the form of an Oscar statuette "presented to an individual in the motion-picture industry whose technological contributions have brought credit to the industry," went to **Irwin W. Young**, chairman of the board of Du Art Film Laboratories and Du Art Video. A longtime fixture of the New York film community, Young helped shepherd a number of independent films to the screen through Du Art. He also worked as a producer on the pictures *Whatever* (1998), *Caught* (1995), *American Me* (1992) and *Nothing But a Man* (1964), which was a double prizewinner at the Venice Film Festival.

In 1979, the Academy honored Young and his Du Art collaborators Paul Kaufman and Frederick Schlyter with a Technical Achievement Award for the development of a computer-controlled paper tape programming system and its application in the motion-picture laboratory. In 1987, the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers (SMPTE) presented Young with its Progress Medal. He is also the recipient of the New York State Governor's Arts Award, and the Independent Feature Project's (IFP) First Annual Gotham Lifetime Achievement Award.

An active member of numerous organizations, Young is currently president of the Film Society of Lincoln Center, a board member of the IFP and an associate member of the American Society of Cinematographers. In addition, he has been president of SMPTE, three-time president of the Association of Cinema and Video Laboratories, chairman and board member of The Moving Image, Inc., and past member of the Colorado Council on the Arts and Humanities and the New York State Council of the Arts. Young is also a fellow of the British Kinematograph Sound and Television Society.

John Bonner Medal of Commendation

This honor, reserved for "outstanding service and dedication in upholding the high standards of the Academy," was given to **N. Paul**

Kenworthy, Jr. for his pioneering efforts and innovations in the design of equipment for shooting feature films using optical relays. Since 1950, he has been innovative in the development of various devices to capture close-up images of desert reptiles and arachnids, as illustrated in such films as Disney's *The Living Desert*.

Throughout his long career, Kenworthy continued to develop numerous types of optical relays for shooting film from various camera points-of-view. In 1977, Kenworthy, along with William R. Latady, received a Scientific and Engineering Award from the Academy for the invention and development of the snorkel camera system. Two years ago, Kenworthy was honored by the Disney Foundation as a "living legend" for his body of work for the Walt Disney Studio. The unique shots captured by Kenworthy's snorkel cameras can be seen in such features as *The Green Mile* and *Gone with the Wind*.

Academy Commendation

This special salute was given to **Ioan Allen, Mark Harrah and Robin Bransbury** for the concept, design and implementation of the TASA Trailer Loudness Standard. In 1997, cinema sound engineers, exhibitors and the major studios formed the Trailer Audio Standards Association to develop a volume standard for theatrical trailers. Subsequently, the Trailer Loudness Standard has become the means by which the film community and audiences are assured a better sound balance between trailers and feature presentations.

"The discrepancy between trailer and feature sound levels has been evident for some time," said Academy Sound Branch Governor Douglas Greenfield. "The TASA program is an extraordinary accomplishment in that the diverse members reached a consensus that a means to determine and limit maximum loudness levels was necessary. Dedicated test equipment was designed to measure subjective loudness, and a series of listening tests was undertaken to evaluate maximum loud-

ness levels. The results of these tests led to the current figure of 86 dB Leq (m)."

The maximum is adhered to by all studios and has the endorsement of the Motion Picture Association of America and the National Association of Theater Owners.

**Academy Award of Merit
(Oscar Statuette)**

Presented for basic achievements that have a definite influence upon the advancement of the industry.

To **Rob Cook, Loren Carpenter** and **Ed Catmull** for their significant advancement to the field of motion-picture rendering, as exemplified in Pixar's "Renderman." According to the Academy, "the trio's broad professional influence in the industry has inspired and continues to inspire and contribute to the advancement of computer-generated imagery for motion pictures."

**Scientific and Engineering
Awards (Academy Plaques)**

Presented for those achievements that exhibit a high level of engineering and are important to the progress of the industry.

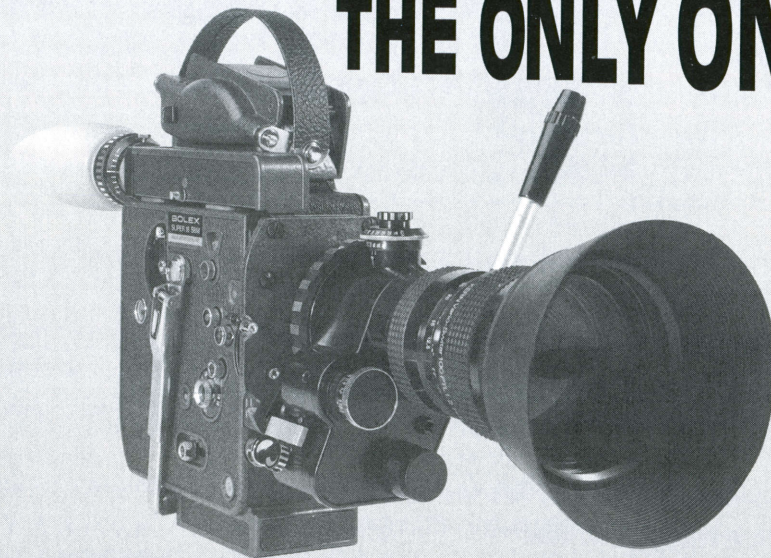
To **Alvah J. Miller** and **Paul Johnson** of Lynx Robotics for the electronic and software design of the Lynx C-50 Camera Motor System. This camera motor, operated with programmable microprocessors, achieves an unprecedented range of precisely controlled speeds in stand-alone cameras or when synchronized to motion-control systems.

To **Al Mayer, Sr.** and **Al Mayer, Jr.** for the mechanical design, **Iain Neil** for the optical design and **Brian Dang** for the electronic design of the Panavision Millennium XL Camera System. This camera brings the full, uncompromised performance of larger heavy-duty cameras to the lightest weight category with ruggedness and advanced features previously expected only in specialized or effects cameras.

To **AKAI Digital** for the design and development of the DD8plus digital audio dubber.

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To **Fairlight** for the design and development of the DaD digital audio dubber.

To **Advanced Digital Systems Group (ADSG)** for the design and development of the Sony DADR 5000 digital audio dubber.

To **Timeline, Incorporated** for the design and development of the MMR 8 digital audio dubber.

The above four digital audio dubbers, all specifically designed for the motion-picture industry, have afforded the postproduction community a faster, more cost-effective means of playing back hundreds of digital audio tracks for pre-mixing or final mixing in creating motion-picture soundtracks. They also offer individual track slipping in multiple-track configurations, random-access recall, and both destructive and non-destructive editing capabilities, eliminating the requirement for razor-blade conforming.

To **Joe Wary, Gerald Painter** and **Colin F. Mossman** for the design

and development of the Deluxe Laboratories Multi Roller Film Transport System. This release-print system at Deluxe Laboratories utilizes a revolutionary design allowing for higher print volumes, reduced space requirements for loop racks and elevator, and safer operation.

Technical Achievement Awards (Academy Certificates)

Presented for those accomplishments that contribute to the progress of the industry.

To **Vic Armstrong** for the refinement and application to the film industry of the Fan Descender for accurately and safely arresting the descent of stunt persons in high freefalls. Considered a standard of the industry, the Fan Descender provides a means for significantly increasing the safety of very high stunt falls. The system permits falls to be made under controlled deceleration and

with a highly predictable stopping point without limitation of camera angles.

To **Bill Tondreau** of Kuper Systems, **Alvah J. Miller** and **Paul Johnson** of Lynx Robotics, and **David Stump** of Visual Effects Rental Services for the conception, design and development of data-capture systems that enable superior accuracy, efficiency and economy in the creation of composite imagery. These systems digitally record live-action camera and axis data with practically no impact on the live-action production process, allowing compositing for visual effects to become faster and more cost-effective.

To **Leonard Pincus, Ashot Nalbandyan, George Johnson, Thomas Kong** and **David Pringle** for the design and development of the SoftSun low-pressure Xenon long-arc light sources, as well as their power supplies and fixtures. With the ability to dim these very high-powered lights at essentially constant Kelvin temperature and without flicker, these units produce a



bright and even light source for general set lighting. The availability of very high-wattage units allows productions to extend the hours of work past the time when the crew would otherwise have "lost the light."

To **Glenn M. Berggren** for the concept, **Horst Linge** for research and development, and **Wolfgang Reinecke** for the optical design of the ISCO Ultra-Star Plus lenses for motion-picture projection. The unique optical design of the Ultra-Star Plus projection lenses achieves unprecedented edge-to-edge uniformity of illumination, combined with a significant increase in screen brightness, thus providing a substantial improvement in the cinema viewing experience.

To **Udo Schauss, Hildegard Ebbesmeier** and **Karl Lenhardt** for the optical design, and **Ralf Linn** and **Norbert Brinker** for the mechanical design of the Schneider Super Cinelux lenses for motion-picture projection. These projection lenses provide a signif-

icant improvement in the quality of the cinema viewing experience.

To **Philip Greenstreet** of Rosco Laboratories for the concept and development of the Roscolight Day/Night Backdrop. This unique photographic scenic backing allows a smooth transition from day to night views with a single backing. The Roscolight backings provide an important new creative tool to filmmakers, saving time, money and stage space.

To **Venkat Krishnamurthy** for the creation of the Paraform Software for 3-D Digital Form Development. This system streamlines the creation of 3-D computer graphic models by allowing artists to convert the data from automatically scanned physical models into a user-specified configuration of patches well-suited for use in computer applications.

To **George Borshukov, Kim Libreri** and **Dan Piponi** for the development of a system for image-based rendering allowing choreographed

camera movements through computer-graphic reconstructed sets. This component of the Manex Visual Effects Virtual Cinematography System provides theatrical-quality virtual settings.

To **John P. Pytlak** for the development of the Laboratory Aim Density (LAD) system. The LAD system has become the standard method used by film laboratories and digital film recording facilities for the efficient and uniform control of color and exposure in camera negatives, interpositives and duplicate negatives.

Correction

One of the captions in our April '01 Production Slate story on *Amores Perros* is incorrect. It is, in fact, director Alejandro González Iñárritu who is pictured next to the camera on page 22, not cinematographer Rodrigo Prieto, AMC. AC regrets the error. ■

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Bohemian Rhapsody

Cinematographer Don McAlpine, ASC, ACS reunites with director Baz Luhrmann to give the musical an unusual and intriguing spin in *Moulin Rouge*.

by Rachael K. Bosley

Unit photography by Sue Adler and Douglas Kirkland

The malleability of the motion-picture musical has led to some interesting experiments over the years, among them the social criticism of *Cabaret*, the B-movie parody of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, the Depression-era fantasies of *Pennies From Heaven* (see Wrap Shot on page 136), and the grim melodrama of *Dancer in the Dark*. The new 20th Century Fox film *Moulin Rouge* reimagines the

genre yet again, this time pairing it with the offbeat vision of Australian impresario Baz Luhrmann. Known for ventures in opera, theater, fashion and music, Luhrmann is familiar to film audiences for directing *Strictly Ballroom* (1992) and the frenetic William Shakespeare's *Romeo+Juliet* (1996).

In a 1992 interview about *Strictly Ballroom*, which portrays an ugly duckling's triumph in the world

of competitive ballroom dance, Luhrmann said, "I wanted to tell this story that everyone knows at such a terrific pace and in such a surprising way that people would be continually disarmed by it." That storytelling method, which employed what Luhrmann called a "graphic cartooning" approach to style and characterization, would surface again in *Romeo+Juliet*. For that film, Luhrmann teamed with cinematog-

rapher Don McAlpine, ASC, ACS to create what he hoped would be a “relentlessly entertaining” version of Shakespeare’s renowned teen romance. Set in the fictional, sun-baked city of Verona Beach (and filmed in Mexico), *Romeo+Juliet* culled its highly stylized imagery from music videos, Mardi Gras and Miami Beach, often achieving the quality of a multicultural, live-action pop-up book whose center of gravity was its tragic lovers.

A veteran of more than 40 feature films, McAlpine calls making *Romeo+Juliet* “one of the great experiences of my career.” That career began in 1962, when McAlpine was hired as an assistant cameraman for Australia’s ABC-TV; he began shooting documentaries for the network and for Film Australia shortly thereafter. In 1972, McAlpine shot *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* for first-time director Bruce Beresford. The film proved to be one of the earliest international success stories for the Australian film industry, and McAlpine and Beresford went on to

collaborate on 10 more films, including *Don’s Party* (1976), *The Getting of Wisdom* (1977), *Breaker Morant* (1979), *King David* (1985) and *The Fringe Dwellers* (1986).

In addition to shooting films for several other first-time directors — including Gillian Armstrong (*My Brilliant Career*) and Mel Gibson (*Man Without a Face*) — McAlpine has teamed with many directors more than once. Such collaborators include Paul Mazursky, for whom McAlpine shot *Tempest* (1982), *Moscow on the Hudson* (1984), *Down and Out in Beverly Hills* (1986) and *Moon Over Parador* (1988); Phillip Noyce, for whom he shot *Patriot Games* (1992) and *Clear and Present Danger* (1994); and Chris Columbus, with whom he teamed on *Mrs. Doubtfire* (1993), *Nine Months* (1995) and *Stepmom* (1998). “There’s a limit to how often you should work with the same director, and it’s pretty hard to define,” McAlpine acknowledges. “It’s a wonderful experience to start out with a new director. It’s really the

closest you can get to a love affair — you’re both very cautious, but you know you’ve got [to get] together to make this thing work. All directors are different, and trying to work out what I can do to be compatible with a director is something I try to learn very, very quickly. For example, does he want me to take over and visually construct the film, or does he have a strong visual concept of his own that I only need to enhance a little bit?”

McAlpine discovered on *Romeo+Juliet* that Luhrmann was an unusual mix of both. In concert with his partner, production designer Catherine Martin, Luhrmann had developed an approach to Shakespeare’s story that was literally teeming with strong visual concepts. At the same time, the pair was eager to collaborate closely with McAlpine to develop strategies for achieving their goal. Interestingly, Luhrmann and Martin had demonstrated a visual and narrative approach quite unlike the Hollywood norm — in *Strictly Ballroom*, as well as in the theater and opera productions they

Opposite page: Lovers Christian (Ewan McGregor) and Satine (Nicole Kidman) fly off into an enchanted Paris evening in the musical *Moulin Rouge*. Director Baz Luhrmann’s desire to achieve “heightened reality” led to the use of painted backings throughout the production, which was shot entirely on soundstages in Australia. This page: *Moulin Rouge* owner Harold Zidler (Jim Broadbent) takes center stage during one of the club’s typically bawdy revues.



Bohemian Rhapsody



A favorite with *Moulin Rouge* patrons, Satine wows the audience with a show-stopping entrance.

had created in Australia — whereas McAlpine's résumé showed he was quite well-versed in that norm. "Hollywood's ability to believe that everyone can play only one note is well documented," the cinematographer observes. "I've enjoyed making the films I've done, but half of them ended up being solid, stylistically normal pieces of work. With Baz and Catherine, I was driven to work outside of that style. When they get together, the result is going to be something 'out there.' You just become a disciple of what they're trying to do. Although shooting [*Romeo+Juliet*] in Mexico nearly killed us all, it was a great experience, and when I heard that Baz wanted me to shoot *Moulin Rouge*, I was thrilled to jump onboard."

An Open Bar

Moulin Rouge is set in 1899 and unfolds in the storied Paris nightclub that gives the film its name. Housed in a windmill in the hilltop Montmartre district, the Moulin Rouge opened in 1889 and became famous for its extravagant live shows — frequently highlighted by performances of the can-can — and for the diversity of its clientele, which

included aristocrats, entrepreneurs and artists. Perhaps its most famous patron in the latter category was the eccentric Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, whose drawings of Montmartre's inhabitants became synonymous with bohemian Paris.

The film chronicles the adventures of Christian (Ewan McGregor), a naive poet who falls in with Toulouse-Lautrec (John Leguizamo) and his fellow artists when he proves to be a savvy lyricist. Christian complicates matters at the Moulin Rouge by falling in love with its most famous courtesan and performer, Satine (Nicole Kidman). Meanwhile, club owner Harold Zidler (Jim Broadbent), eager to turn the Moulin Rouge into a legitimate theater, encourages Satine to cozy up to a potential financier, the unappealing Duke (Richard Roxburgh). Drama ensues when Duke turns out to be a very jealous suitor. "In terms of the story elements, it's really more of an opera than a musical," McAlpine observes.

The cinematographer's work on *Moulin Rouge* began with several months of preproduction in Sydney, Australia, which included many readings of the script co-authored by

Luhrmann and Craig Pearce. "After I came aboard, they went through about five drafts of the script, all of which were acted out by a cast," McAlpine recalls. "Those readings helped me develop ideas on how to photograph the story. Then Catherine Martin began throwing design ideas past me and asking for my suggestions. To a lesser extent, I also observed and participated in the design of the musical numbers, making sure that the choreography would work within the spatial arrangements."

In keeping with the self-conscious style of his first two films, Luhrmann wanted to create a Paris that never really existed for *Moulin Rouge*. The production was therefore filmed on soundstages at 20th Century Fox in Sydney. "The term Baz kept using was 'heightened reality,'" recalls Steve Mathis, McAlpine's longtime gaffer. "It's a very theatrical movie — even the exteriors were all shot on stage, and we used painted backdrops. Nobody's going to think we're in Paris, but it looks theatrically real. Baz sets up the film language five minutes into the movie, and viewers will either like it or not."

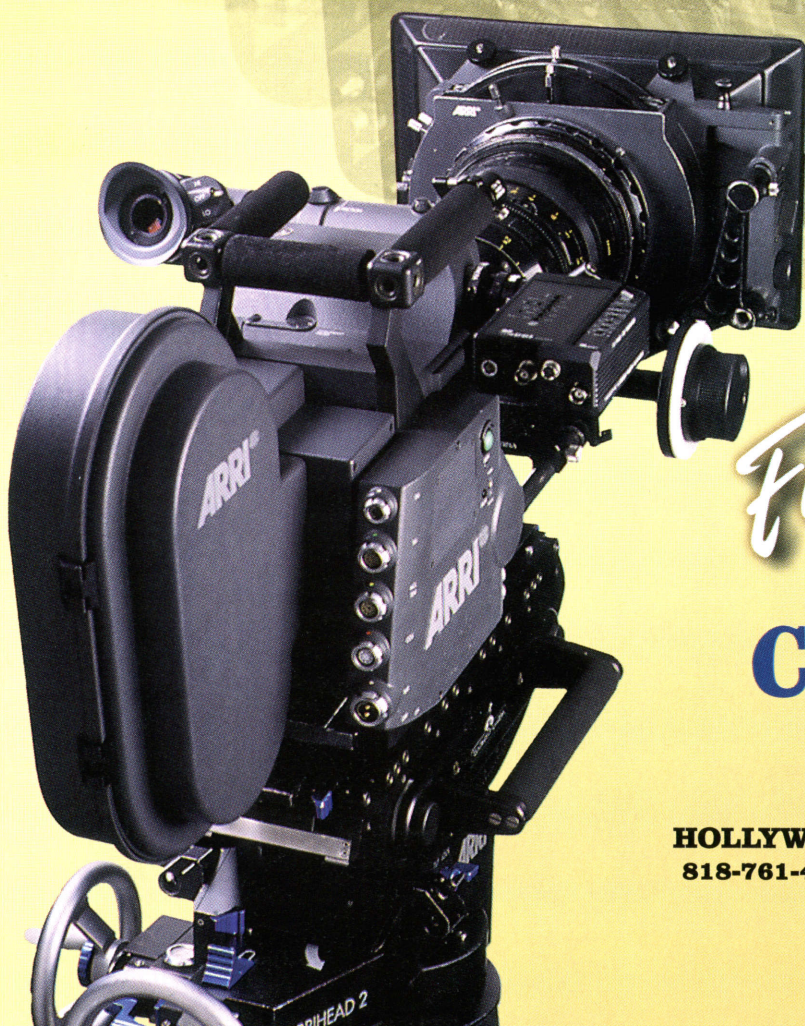
Establishing that film language frequently required improvisation by both the crew and cast. "Baz is an originator, not an elaborator," McAlpine observes. "The actors would improvise, then he would improvise how he'd like to shoot it, and everyone would argue their opinions." The cameraman adds that such spontaneity suits his own style quite well. "It's easy to analyze [how I light and shoot] once it's behind me, but when I'm doing it, it's just a visceral thing. It sounds trite, but I really do try to paint with light on the day. I simply go with what I think is right. I always have a backup plan in mind, something that will definitely work for the scene, but I try very hard to stay flexible and loose."

"My relationship with Baz developed during *Romeo+Juliet*, so

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Bohemian Rhapsody



Above: Christian and Satine reunite for the film's climactic musical number, which required a complex lighting scheme that cinematographer Don McAlpine and his crew designed and executed in just two days. The diagram on the facing page shows the scene's overhead lighting, while the diagrams on page 45 illustrate supplemental ground lighting and house lighting. Right: McAlpine (left) and Luhrmann consider their options while the crew readies the elaborate set for the musical finale.

we didn't have to go through the 'courting process' on *Moulin Rouge*," he continues. "We hit the ground running. What I bring to our collaboration is pretty extensive experience — I'm going to throw away most of it [while working with him], but it gives me a basis on which to improvise. If you at least know the rules, you know when you're breaking them. And on this film, we broke every rule in the book."

Mathis, who has been McAlpine's gaffer for 12 years, agrees. "Don and I had never really done a stage show together, and this movie looks like nothing I've ever seen him shoot," he remarks. "I think his best movies, things like *Clear and Present Danger*, don't even look 'lit' or 'shot'; they just look good, very clean and very natural. But Don adapted to all of Baz's suggestions, and you can't be too weird for Baz. On the first set we used, for example, Baz came in one night and said he wanted the sky to be green and pink for the point of

view of some characters who were drunk on absinthe. We got a crew together and stayed up all night cutting gels, and we lit it. But in the meantime, the script had changed, and that approach didn't fit the scene anymore, so we didn't shoot it.

"In keeping with the idea of 'heightened reality,'" Mathis continues, "we gelled lights with Lee 165

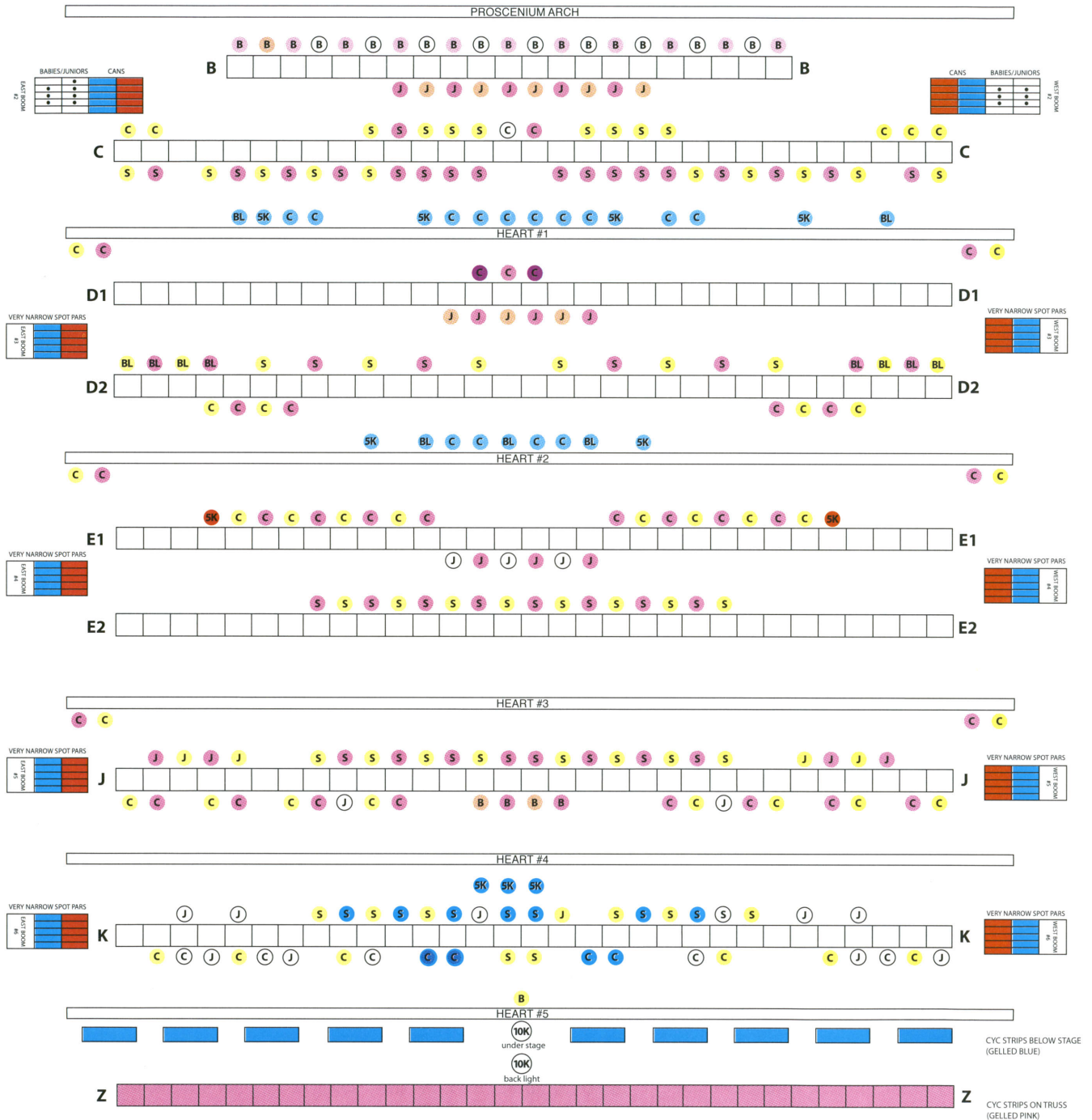
Daylight Blue for all of the night scenes, which makes for incredibly blue 'moonlight.' Don normally goes with 1/4 Blue on tungsten lights outdoors [for moonlit scenes], so this was obviously a big departure. It was one of many."

Luhrmann's approach to filmmaking "is based on uncorrupted judgment," McAlpine observes with



OVERHEAD STAGE LIGHTING

A U D I E N C E



KEY			
	1K Baby (pink, straw, no color)		Source 4 Leko (med. pink, canary, blue)
	2K Junior (med. pink, straw, no color)		2K Blonde (med. pink, canary, med. blue)
	Par can holding Very Narrow or Narrow Spot Par (med. pink, dark pink, canary, med. blue, blue, no color)		5K (med. blue, blue, red)

Diagrams
courtesy of
Steve Mathis

Bohemian Rhapsody



The crew captures a close-up of Satine as she begins the musical production that marks the first attempt at "legitimate" theater. McAlpine notes that "the camera is never standing back, never a distant observer, and always trying to capture the energy [throughout the film]."

a laugh. "There's an unwritten style manual for Hollywood films, but that book doesn't exist when you work with Baz. If he thinks it's best to put the camera at somebody's navel, looking up his or her nostrils, then we do. If it's best to have the camera looking straight down on a lead actor's bald patch, we do it. We failed with some ideas every day, but failure has always meant to me that you've just slightly exceeded your greatest limit. If failure happens in a genuine attempt, it's a wonderful thing."

Setting the Stage

McAlpine found that the Panavision/Kodak PreView System, which he was using for the first time on *Moulin Rouge*, was of great assistance in showing Luhrmann how his lighting plans would look on film. "The system is marginally useful in terms of lighting and exposure — after all, I should know what it tells me anyway," the cinematographer points out. "Its greatest advantage for me was in communicating with Baz. He might look at something on the monitor and say 'I don't like that,' but then I'd use a laptop to show him the PreView stills of how that scene would finally look, and he'd say, 'Oh, I like that.' Most of the time, the dailies looked just like [the laptop image]. The PreView System can prevent fires before they start, and in

that regard it's a great tool."

Mathis adds, "Lighting this film wasn't like lighting a classroom or a living room — we're talking about Gothic towers and gargoyles. Baz has very definite ideas about how he wants things to look, and he needs to see stuff [in order to make decisions]. Don used the PreView to show Baz what the set in progress would look like. The system was most important with all of the painted backings — you can get a light reading on a backing that will tell you there's X amount of light, but that won't tell you what it's going to look like. The PreView System could. I shot film tests on almost every stage to show Baz and Don what the final set would look like."

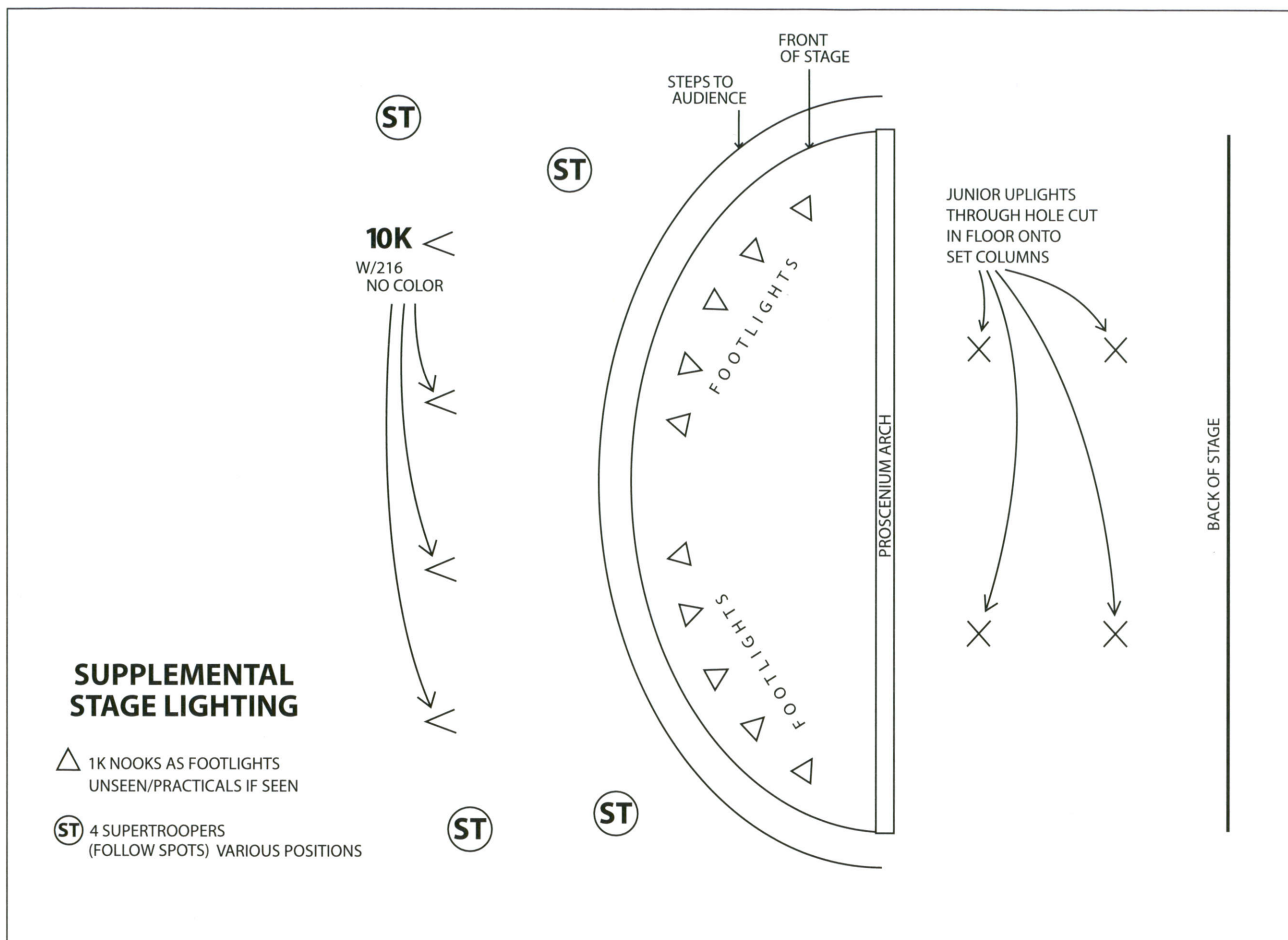
Moulin Rouge was shot in the 2.35:1 anamorphic format, a favorite of McAlpine's. "My last 10 or 11 films have been anamorphic, and I love the format for many reasons," he explains. "One of them is that when the audience sits down in a theater, the screen just keeps going. They know they're not watching a TV movie. [Another reason is that] you can use a medium-sized lens to capture a performance, as well as a lot of the set design supporting the performance."

"We had arguments over the format with Fox, because the visual-effects people were pushing for Super

35," he continues. "But Super 35 means you're working with less than half of the visual information [available in the anamorphic frame]. Our solution was to shoot scenes that would feature CGI in Super 35 on slightly slower film stock, so that the grain structure would match the grain structure of the anamorphic work. It worked out well."

McAlpine adds that using Panavision's Millennium camera made it easy to switch formats quickly. He relied primarily on Panavision Primo anamorphic lenses, and used the C-series lenses for handheld and Steadicam work. Although he employed up to four Millenniums to shoot some of the musical sequences, McAlpine says that "97 percent" of *Moulin Rouge* was shot with a single camera. "I've got a theory that if the main camera is in exactly the right position, then the second camera can't be, because the right position is already occupied," he explains. "I also find that using more than one camera dissipates energy — my own, the director's and the actors'. With one camera, the actor knows that *that* is his audience, whereas if the B-camera is alongside, it splits his attention. He thinks, 'One of these cameras has 50 million people behind it, but which one is it?'"

The cinematographer credits



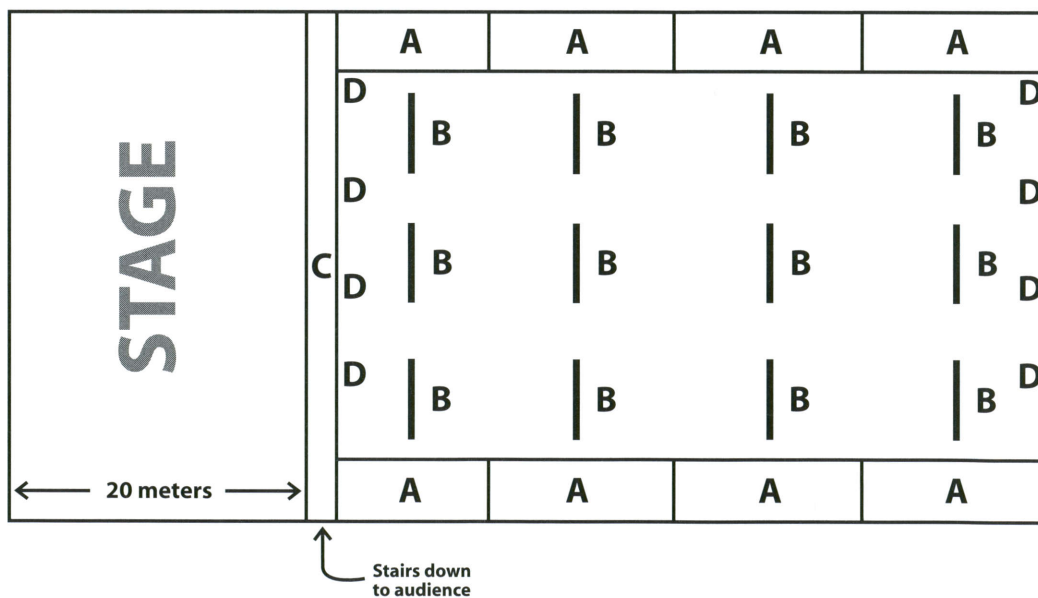
MAIN HALL LAMPS

A= 10K on rolling stand (placed on roof of 2nd floor booths)

B= Mix of 10Ks, 5Ks and 2Ks on a truss

C= Four 10Ks with Lee 216 on a truss

D= 12-light Maxi-Brute (positioned as needed)



Bohemian Rhapsody

first AC Patrick McArdle with achieving stellar results with the anamorphic format's limited depth of field. "I've worked with Patrick since *Mrs. Doubtfire*, and he's one of two truly gifted first assistants I've worked with in my career," he enthuses. "He compensates an awful lot for the lack of depth of field by just innate skill. I'll be truly perplexed when he moves up to the next step of his career."

Moulin Rouge was shot on Kodak Vision 500T 5279 film stock rated normally, and McAlpine says the PreView System enabled him to work to the limits of the stock's shadow and highlights areas. "I basically light by eye," he explains. "When you're shooting on a new set, you tune your eye in a day or so, and it's

easy to play it safe and continue the same melody for the rest of the sequence. I used the PreView System to challenge myself and explore where the piece could go. The PreView is not an exact reproduction of the next day's print from the lab; it is, however, the best immediate interpretation available today.

"A financial advantage was that the PreView System enabled me to print at the same lights for the entire film," he continues. "That also removed the problems that arise when some timer in the dead of night has to interpret your intent." He adds that the production used film dailies throughout the shoot. "Working with video dailies is like tuning a Stradivarius through a microphone and a pair of cheap

headphones," he says with a dismissive gesture.

Moulin Rouge required about eight months of principal photography, and Mathis says that three separate crews were often rigging three stages at once. "Australia operates with the European system, which means there's no key grip in the American sense," Mathis explains. "The gaffer is in charge of nets, flags, cutters, teasers, rigging, putting in clamps, and so on. That added a level of complexity to my job. Fortunately, I'd worked within that system before." McAlpine, who has brought Mathis onto all of his projects since they met on *Career Opportunities* (1991), says, "I just wave my arms, and Steve knows what to do. He's a brilliant gaffer, and we've worked together for so long that he can anticipate what I want to do. We can ad-lib on even the most gigantic sets. To me, every minute or obstacle that stops me from working with the director, the camera and the actor [is crucial] ... because that's really the making of the film."

Going All Out

Although *Moulin Rouge* is set in 1899, the musical numbers are almost exclusively popular songs from the late 20th century by artists such as The Beatles, Madonna and U2. In light of that major anachronism — and in keeping with the theatrical visual scheme the filmmakers had in mind — Mathis says he "kept bugging Don and everyone else to not be historically accurate with the lighting. Eventually everyone came to the same conclusion: we should make it look as good as possible. So for instance, we decided to play the tango scene [set to The Police's "Roxanne"] with follow spots, even though they didn't have those lights in 1899. We used four follow spots, and we backlit the dancers with two of them. While Don was talking to the cameras, I was out on the floor, trying to keep the A-



Christian and Satine enjoy their fledgling romance, which is complicated by the fact that she is not only an actress, but also a popular courtesan.

camera in constant backlight. The dancers were always silhouetted with three-quarter backlight.

"None of the scenes in the film are what you'd call 'normal,'" Mathis adds. "The film doesn't drop out of big theatrical numbers into typical over-the-shoulder coverage! I think the most normal set is Satine's bedroom — and that's all red velvet and mirrors."

The highly stylized world of *Moulin Rouge* posed a number of lighting challenges, but Luhrmann's improvisational approach encouraged the crew to tackle them in a variety of ways. "Working with Baz means that you can do anything, as long as it fits," McAlpine says. Mathis adds, "Baz even likes mistakes. Don and I actually made a rule that we'd never turn off a light in his presence, because he likes the set darker than you can actually shoot. I turned off a light once when Baz was there, and he said right away, 'I like that!' Don came over to me and said with a laugh, 'Now you've done it!'"

Luhrmann's desire to achieve a look of "heightened" reality rather than pure reality meant that some effects could be achieved quite simply. "There's a night sequence in which Christian and Satine dance, then sort of fly off above the streets of Paris," Mathis details. "The actors leave a real doorway, then proceed to 'float' over a stage full of miniatures. We floated fog on the ground and had a night-blue backing behind [the city]. Someone suggested that we add some twinkling stars, so we simply cut holes in the backing, hung Mylar behind the backing and aimed hard light and fans at the Mylar. We got our twinkling stars."

The show's most complicated lighting job was one that McAlpine and his crew initially thought they wouldn't have to worry about. McAlpine explains, "In the film, Zidler builds a legitimate stage in the very back of his club, which is where he wants to stage real theatrical

productions. Early on in production, Baz asked the top theater-lighting designer in Australia to design the lighting for the production that takes place on that set. He went to work on it, but a few days before those scenes were to be shot, he said he would need seven days of rehearsals on the stage to perfect his lighting, which is what he typically does in the theater. We saw on the schedule that he'd only have one night to do it. He said he simply couldn't do it on that

timetable, so everyone turned to me. I said, 'Well, it's what I do.'

"We had roughly two days to light that set, and Steve Mathis and the Australian crew worked through the night to do it," McAlpine continues. "We initially thought we'd start off the performance with little footlights to be historically correct, but the style of the film had by then developed into one of extreme exaggeration, so the initial idea wasn't going to fit. It instead became a very

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Bohemian Rhapsody



Romance blossoms atop one of the five-story elephant statues in the courtyard of the Moulin Rouge. One of McAlpine's many theatrical touches was the use of Lee's 165 Daylight Blue gel for the film's night-exterior scenes.

contemporary, very complex lighting plan." [See diagrams on pages 43 and 45.]

Mathis explains, "The designer they'd hired had approached it as a stage show, so he had lit the stage to eye rather than to stop. So I went in with a rigging crew on a Saturday, and we hung mountains of lights, at least 150 of them. We didn't know where any of the actors were going to stand, and we had to light big areas. As a result, the performance is lit more like a rock concert than a play; we lit it by color rather than by position, so we could fade from one color to another. I've never lit a play, but I believe you'd normally light certain areas of the stage with certain colors. Instead, we just lit blocks of color in sidelight, frontlight and backlight. I think the only modern convention we didn't use was moving lights." (Ed. Note: The final lighting scheme varied slightly from the Overhead Stage Lighting Diagram on page 43.)

Mathis and his crew rigged

trusses over the stage with 1K Babies, 2K Juniors and Blondes, 5Ks, Source 4 Lekos and Par cans that held either Very Narrow Spot Pars (VNSP) or Narrow Spots; all of the lights were gelled with shades of pink, blue and yellow. In addition, booms on both sides of the stage were rigged with lights gelled blue and red. The two booms closest to the front of the stage held Par cans, Babies and Juniors, and the other eight booms held VNSPs. "We had about one crewmember for every two trusses," Mathis recalls. "It was a really awkward space to rig, because we had to work around the [heart] setpieces, and we didn't have time to bring in scissor lifts or anything like that. So each guy had to go up in the perms, crawl hand-over-hand out over the stage and hang upside-down to reach the lights."

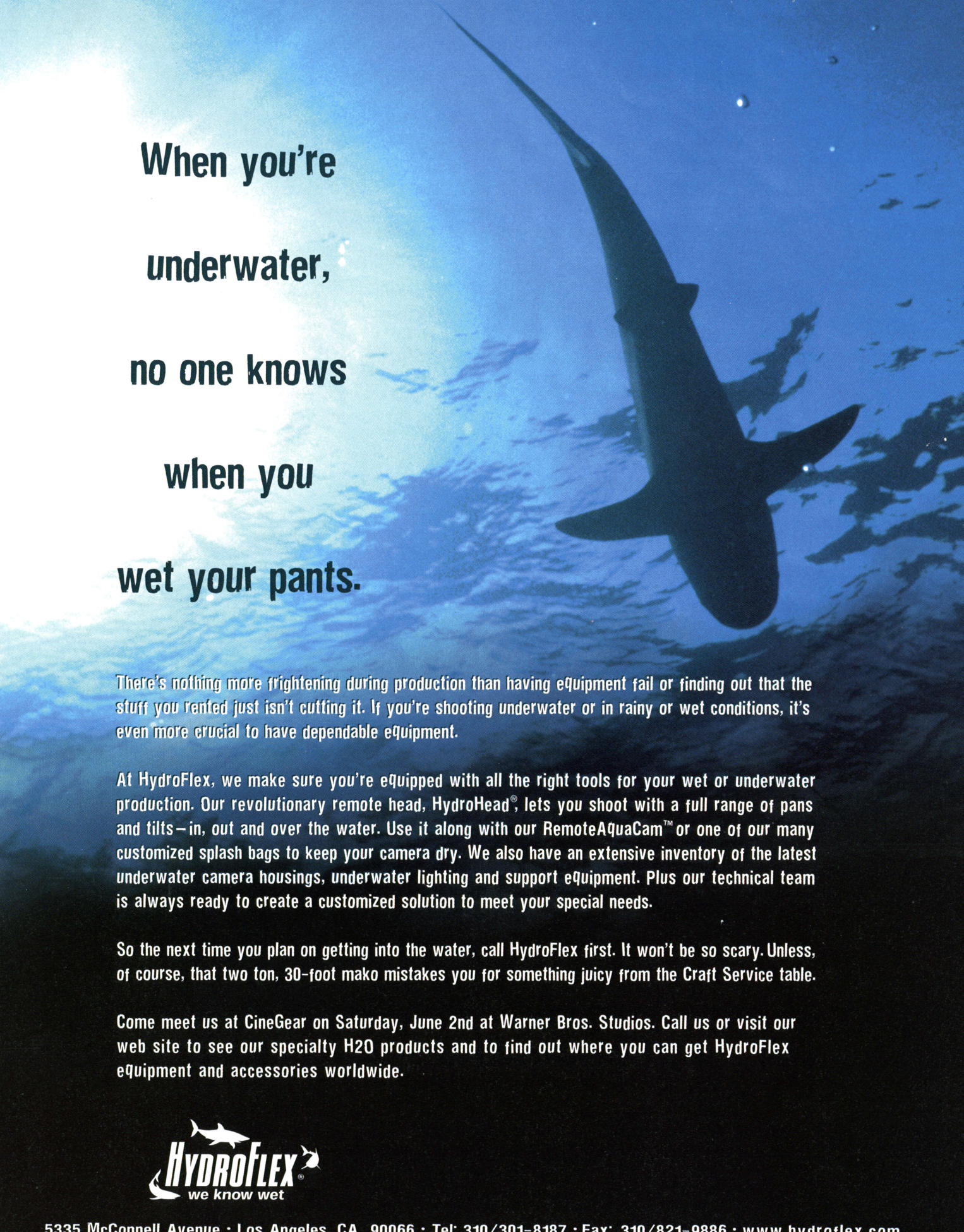
Lights were also hung at the top of each of the heart setpieces, and the crew positioned a 10K under the stage and a 10K as backlight behind

the heart at the rear of the stage. In the same area, Cyc Strips were hung above the set and below the stage, and were aimed at the backing; these units were gelled pink and blue.

To augment the lights that were hung, the crew cut holes in the stage floor close to the column setpieces and positioned 2K Juniors under the stage to provide uplight. For footlights at the front of the stage, the production employed period practicals when the lights could be seen by the camera, and 1K nook lights hidden behind seashells when they couldn't be seen. To provide front fill for the performance, four 10Ks augmented with Lee 216 were hung on a truss above the steps leading from the stage to the floor of the club. Four Supertrooper follow spots were also placed in different positions to help highlight action on the stage.

The musical number is a medley that climaxes with the song "Come What May," which Satine and Christian have agreed will be a secret signal between them. As the medley progresses, backings rise from the stage, gradually revealing three distinct stages, each higher than the previous one. "We didn't shoot the medley in order, of course, because that would've been too easy!" Mathis says with a laugh. "We finished hanging the lights about three hours into Monday, then I got to see one rehearsal on the stage, and then we started shooting. We had no lighting rehearsals. All of the cues had to be called live; we didn't have time to do playback.

"Almost every light was on its own circuit, and our dimmer-board operator, Grant Neutroski, consolidated the cues into two boards," Mathis details. "He and I and four follow-spot operators did the whole thing live. There are dramatic color shifts all the way through the performance. We play Satine's entrance with a cold blue light, then we shift to a primary red, and by the time we get



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Bohemian Rhapsody

to the end of the piece the lighting is mainly pink and gold. The lights change on the beat. Sometimes we'd take it to just backlight, or to back-and-sidelight with no fill.

"I was guessing at what would look good! I had listened to a mix of the songs in the medley a few times before we shot the first take. We managed to intuitively figure out what cues worked the best on the first take, so at the end of that take, we ended up with a lighting plan that we kept. Catherine Martin had given me a Photoshop rendering of what she wanted the finale to look like, and she just couldn't believe how well we matched it. It's exactly what she showed us." (See photo that accompanies diagram on page 42.)

The Main Hall where the audience is seated had already been in use by the production as a *Moulin Rouge* interior, according to Mathis. "We'd been shooting in that space for a

while, and the area that became the stage for the performance had been walled off while that set was being built," he recalls. To illuminate the Main Hall during the theater performance, the crew rigged more than a dozen trusses with 10Ks, 5Ks and 2K Juniors that could be raised and lowered on chain motors and accessed by catwalks on both sides of the soundstage. (See diagram on page 45.) They also placed four 12-light Maxi-Brutes at each end of the Main Hall and positioned them as needed. To help illuminate the space from the side, the crew positioned 10Ks on rolling stands on the roofs of the second-floor booths. In addition, hundreds of practicals, including festooning and windmill-shaped fixtures, were placed around the hall.

Back to the Future

Although he has worked almost exclusively on U.S. produc-

tions for the past 20 years, McAlpine found himself working with a treasured collaborator from his early days in Australia during post on *Moulin Rouge*: colorist Arthur Cambridge at Sydney's Atlab. "Arthur worked on many of the early Australian films I shot, including *The Getting of Wisdom* and *My Brilliant Career*," he says. "He's considered by many to be a genius, and now that there's more production in Australia, he's being 'discovered' by others." While shooting *The Time Machine* in Los Angeles this spring, McAlpine spent weekends watching reels of *Moulin Rouge* at Fox and working with Cambridge by telephone.

The cinematographer hopes *Moulin Rouge*'s indisputably modern take on the musical will bring new life to the genre. "During prep, we all talked about how the form that was a brilliant success in the Forties and Fifties just isn't acceptable to an audi-

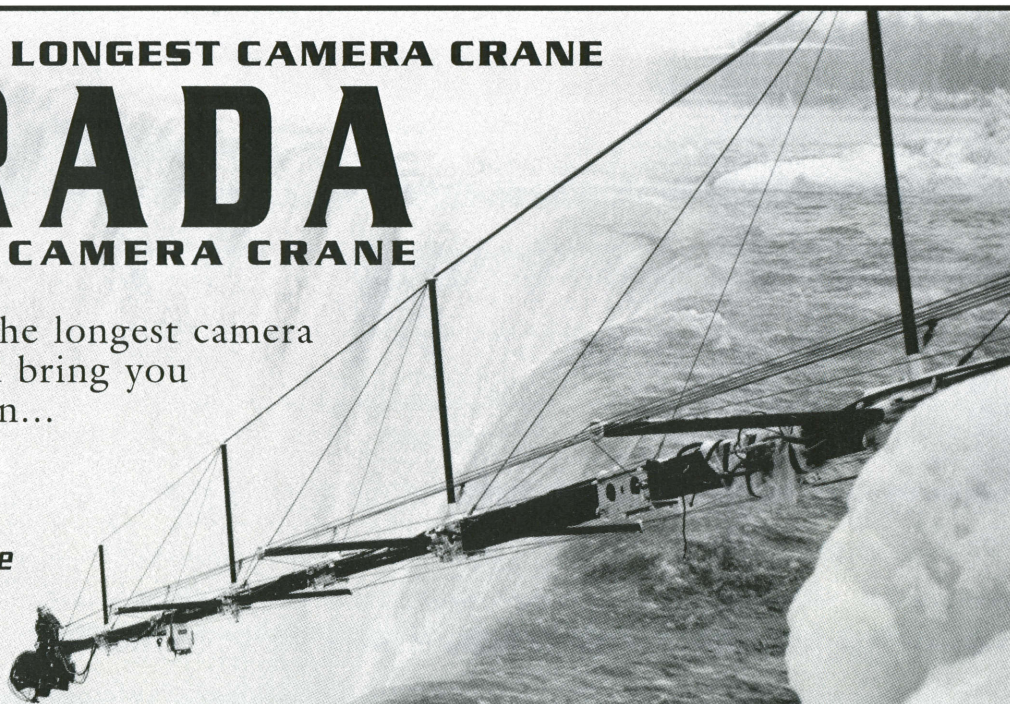
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ence today — the magic, the innocence that it's based on, just isn't there anymore, and the audience won't even pretend it is. In a very arrogant way, *Moulin Rouge* reinvents the musical for the younger generation, with much the same arrogance that *Romeo+Juliet* reinvented Shakespeare. The greatest thing would be if in two years' time, the musical form were totally acceptable again. But it's doubtful, because the work Baz and Catherine put into this film would be hard to imitate."

The challenge of shooting a film like *Moulin Rouge* is "the indefinable thing of trying to capture the energy," McAlpine says in conclusion. "The fact that we were shooting many of the close-ups with extreme-wide 40-50mm anamorphic lenses was an attempt to really be 'in there' with the energy. The camera is never standing back, never a distant observer. We'd sometimes have an



actor three feet away from a 14-inch-wide lens — and those were glamour shots, which are normally shot with a long lens from a distance! I feel we've

made a great movie, the kind for which you *really* hope there's an audience."

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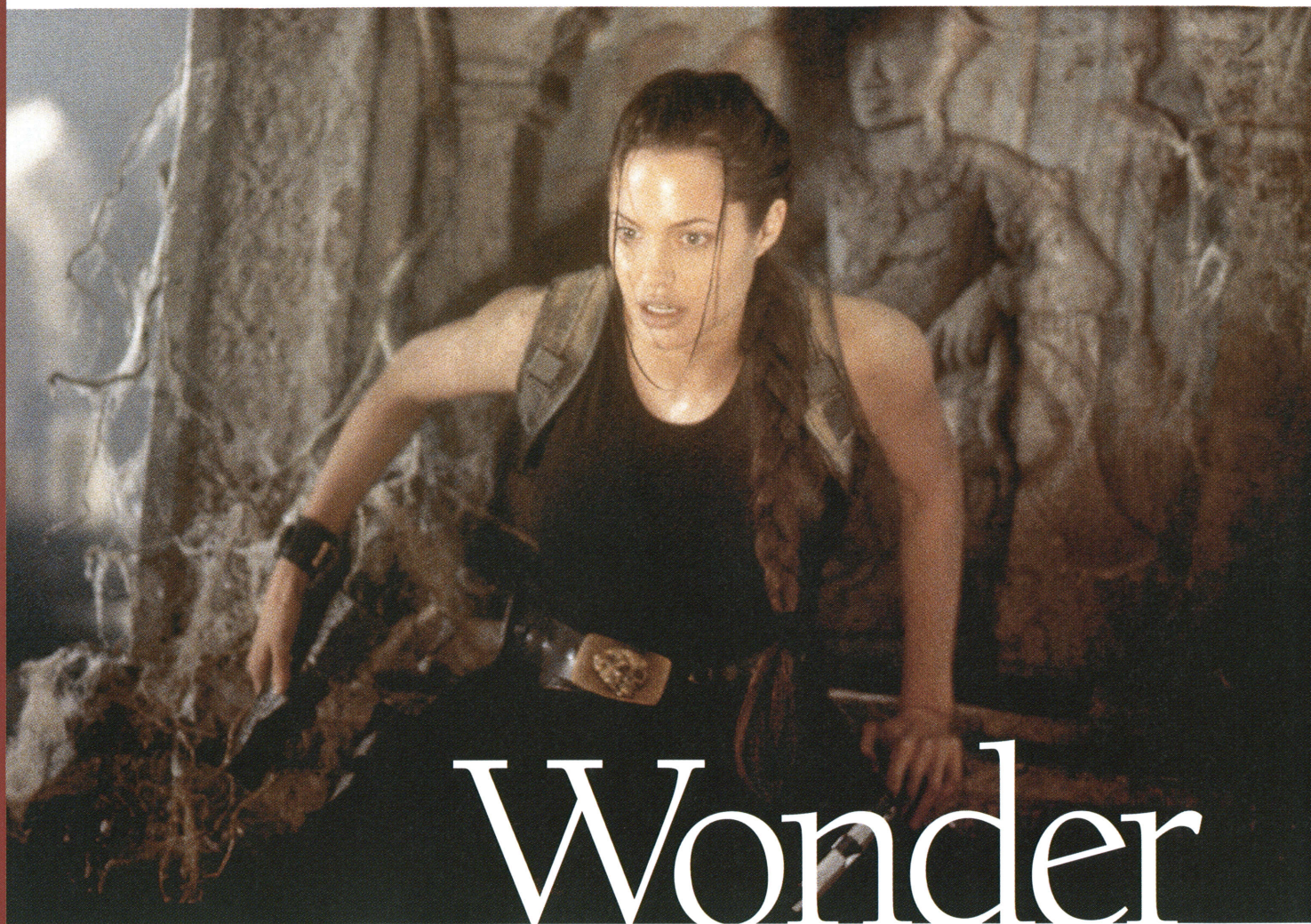
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Wonder Woman

Voluptuous videogame icon Lara Croft springs to life in *Tomb Raider*, shot by Peter Menzies Jr., ACS and directed by Simon West.

by Jay Holben

Unit photography by Alex Bailey

More ubiquitous than Pac-Man, curvaceous fortune hunter Lara Croft has become the cybergeek's fantasy woman, a distaff Indiana Jones whose adventures in the world of video games have been a phenomenal success for Eidos Interactive. Croft is also the first virtual celebrity to find a stronghold in the world of flesh-and-blood stars, appearing on more than 200 magazine covers around the globe and gracing the pages of *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Rolling Stone* and *Entertainment Weekly*. Her latest adventure unfolds

fun and imaginative," West recalls. "*Tomb Raider* came across my desk, and I turned it down. It was very cliché — an English adventurer who runs around finding treasure. It was *Raiders of the Lost Ark* meets *Austin Powers*."

"But the character of Lara Croft was very intriguing," West continues. "There really haven't been any female action-adventure heroines since *Alien*, and the mixture of fantasy and adventure soon captured my interest. So I said I'd do it, and I began the quest for the story. I kept the game's title, Lara's name, and

bring A-camera and Steadicam operator David Emmerichs with him from Los Angeles. "David worked with me on *Bless the Child* and he'd worked with Simon on *Con Air*, so it was very much a tight, friendly team," Menzies notes. "We were all able to speak a common language. David doubles as both A-camera operator and Steadicam operator, and he's fantastic. Not only does it mean one less person in the camera crew, but it makes it seamless to change a shot from one method to the next, which can be a great time-saver."

Having worked as an operator for a number of years, Menzies confesses that he can be more demanding of operators than most cinematographers. "A big part of the game is to find the best people to join the team. I'm lucky enough to work with really great people with high levels of experience and ability, so they don't have a problem with my pushing them a bit more than usual. David is a very aggressive operator; his compositions are very energetic and powerful, which was even more important in England, where the distinction is made between lighting cameraman and operator."

The world of Lara Croft has been fairly well examined in five successful video games and a comic-book series, and West says that "we wanted to give the audiences something fresh. I didn't just want to do a 3-D version of the game on the big screen. I also tried to stay away from

Opposite page: Tireless fortune hunter Lara Croft (Angelina Jolie) encounters plenty of obstacles in *Tomb Raider*, which brings the popular video-game heroine to the big screen for the first time. This page, left: Croft enjoys a meditative moment before resuming her global quest for lost treasure. Bottom: Cinematographer Peter Menzies, Jr. checks his light level on location in Cambodia.



on the big screen in *Tomb Raider*, in which Croft is brought to life by Angelina Jolie.

Spearheading the effort to bring this larger-than-life adventure to the screen were director Simon West and cinematographer Peter Menzies, Jr., ACS, who had previously teamed on *The General's Daughter* (see AC July '99). Menzies' feature credits include *The Kid* (AC July '00), *The 13th Warrior*, *Hard Rain* (AC Jan. '98) and *A Time to Kill* (AC Aug. '96). West earned his stripes as a commercial director for companies such as McDonald's, Sprite, Ford, Miller and Budweiser, and he also directed *Con Air* (AC June '97). "I had just finished *The General's Daughter*, which was a very dark story, and I wanted to do something

started from scratch on all the rest. I watched every documentary on tombs and read every *New Scientist* and *National Geographic* I could get my hands on. I came across an article about the coming planetary alignment, and that became the main building block for the story."

Tomb Raider took the filmmakers on a trek around the world, from the barren landscapes of Iceland to the sultry jungles of Cambodia; the production was the first Western project allowed to shoot in the latter country in more than three decades. Most of the film's interiors were shot at Pinewood Studios in London. Although *Tomb Raider* was Menzies' first England-based feature and he was working primarily with a new crew, he was able to



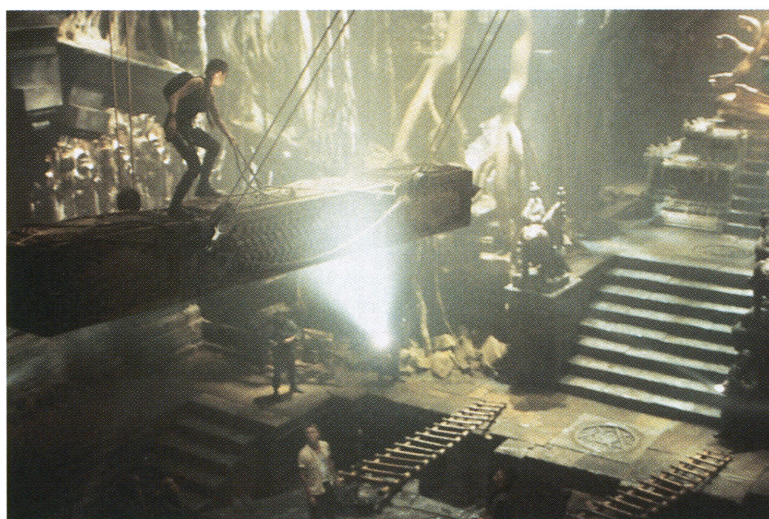
Wonder Woman



The production created the interior of the Temple of Dancing Light on a soundstage at London's Pinewood Studios. The design was based on a magnificent temple in the jungle city of Angkor, Camobodia.

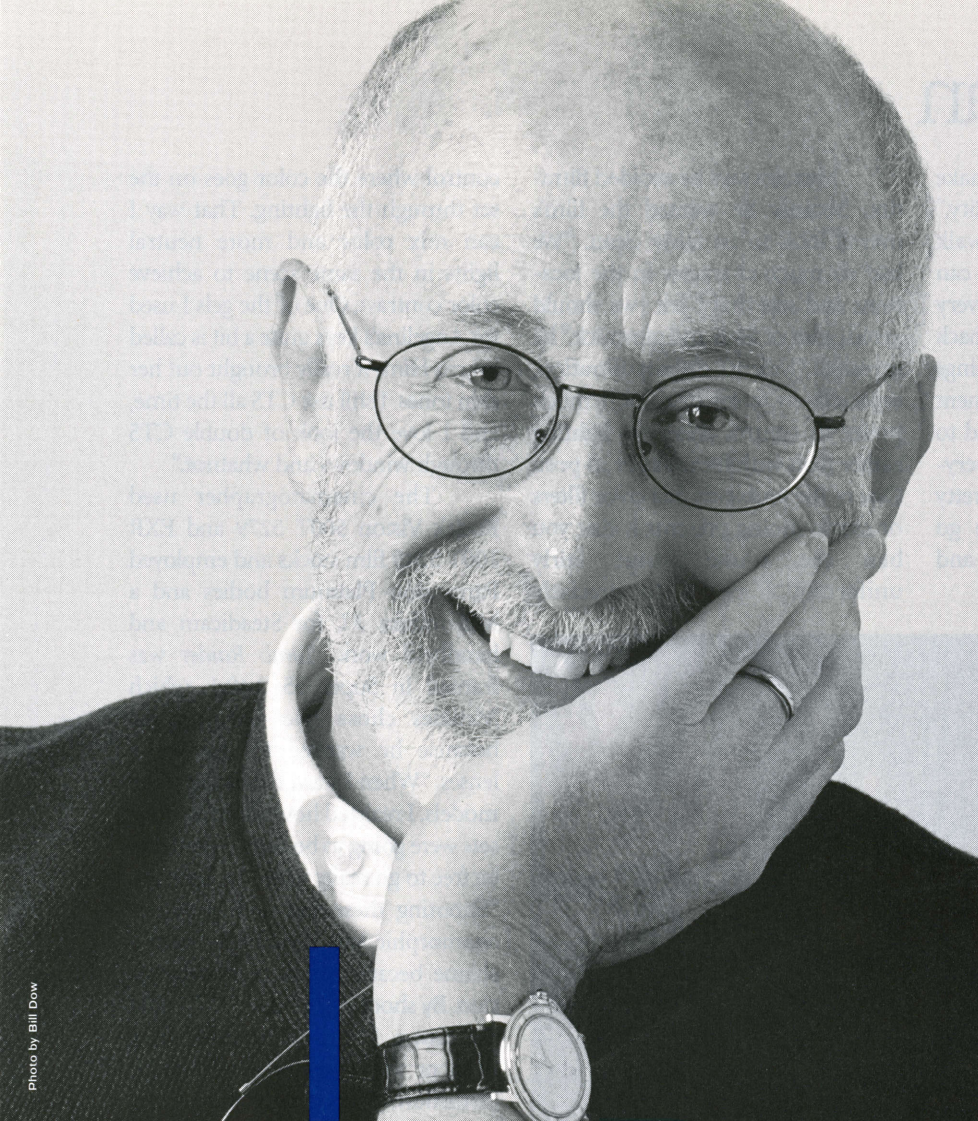
ground that was covered in the Indiana Jones films. I didn't want any sand, pyramids, or anything yellow, and we didn't put in snakes, boats, rats or mummies coming out of walls. I chose locations and environments that aren't in any of those other films. Also, the Indiana Jones films are period pieces set in the 1930s, [whereas] this is a contemporary piece — if not a slightly higher end of contemporary. We could therefore take advantage of technology and different environments to separate us from what had already been done."

"Super contemporary" is how production designer Kirk Petrucci (Blade, Mystery Men, The Patriot) describes the film's look. "Simon had a great impression of what the film should be, and he gave me some key metaphors and ideas to work from. He said, for example, 'No dust!' He



wanted to stay away from *The Mummy* and other period adventure films. We wanted to make *Tomb Raider* global, powerful and exciting. We went for ancient reality smashed together with the super-modern, and I tried to create [sets] that Peter

[Menzies] could really make sing on the screen." Menzies adds, "We worked to tweak the action to suit the story elements, and not the other way around. Simon set up the rules early on for how we would deal with magic and reality in the same breath."



stephen
goldblatt
asc, bsc

Photo by Bill Dow

ON DIGITAL

"A friend (director Frank Pierson) had this project for HBO about the 1942 Wansee Conference in Berlin where the Nazis implemented the Holocaust. We had 20 days to shoot a 120-page script primarily in one room. Over the years, I've shot a million feet of 16mm documentary film. I wanted to bring that feeling to *Conspiracy*.

Once you're in the digital suite the genie is out of the bottle. You can do anything. It was the same as color timing except you have much more flexibility and control. You can change colors in subtle ways, make the image a little darker, bring it up slightly and then increase contrast within the scene, not just scene to scene, because you have dynamic control. You can do some of the fine brushwork in digital post. It's an extension of the role of the cinematographer.

HBO was fantastic. They encouraged me to explore every possibility."

Stephen Goldblatt filmed *Conspiracy* in Super 16 format. Cinesite Hollywood converted the film to digital format. The digital master was used as a single source for all release formats including 35mm film and HD master. *Conspiracy* will premiere at the Holocaust museum in Washington D.C.. Goldblatt's credits include *The Pelican Brief*, *Batman Forever*, *The Hunger*, *Cotton Club*, *Lethal Weapon*, *Young Sherlock Holmes* and *The Prince of Tides*.

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Wonder Woman

"I was not trying to make everything exactly reflect reality," confirms West. "When you walk down a street in Lara's world, it can look exactly like a street you see every day, but then you go down a back alley and all sorts of weird things start happening. The fantasy element was a big draw for me, but I had to find a place to draw the line; everything above ground has to be pretty plausible, but as soon as we go underground the gloves are off and anything can happen."

Menzies says he avoided filtration because he wanted the film's overall look to be fairly clean. "We had so much character in the locations and sets that I felt [we should avoid] a lot of flash and gimmick," he explains. "I didn't do any filtration, especially in terms of color. I much prefer to control color via lighting rather than with filtration or in post. One of the problems that color filters or classic timing presents is that you bias the whole image fairly uniformly. I prefer to precisely

control where the color goes on the set through the lighting. That way I can mix color and more neutral lights in the same scene to achieve color contrast. One of the gels I used for Angelina's keys quite a bit is called Warm Hint; it really brought out her skin tones. I still use CTS all the time, and I love the look of double CTS through windows and whatnot."

The cinematographer used Kodak Vision 500T 5279 and EXR 100T 5248 film stocks and employed Panavision Platinum bodies and a Millennium XL for Steadicam and handheld work. *Tomb Raider* was framed in Super 35 2.40:1, which Menzies chose over anamorphic because he wanted to use wider lenses. "When I started looking at the models, I realized how amazing these sets were going to be, and I wanted to be free to go really wide," he submits. "Shooting these sets with a 30mm anamorphic lens would have been a shame because of all of the distortion. By shooting in Super 35, I could pull out a 17mm without thinking twice or worrying about wide-angle distortion. This is only the second time I've gone with Super 35; the first was when I shot *Hard Rain*.

"I also wanted to stay away from anamorphic because this film required a good deal of digital effects, and I wanted to make that process a bit faster and easier for the post people," Menzies continues. "When you use anamorphic lenses, the digital artists have to work with the aberrations and distortions of those lenses, but with Super 35 you don't have to worry about that and the work can go that much faster in post."

"This meant, however, that nearly everything I shot was at a T2.8 to give an anamorphic feel to the overall image. Actually, virtually everything I do is at a T2.8. That's also why I tend to stick to only one or two stocks. If I switch to another stock, the necessary difference in the light levels can create an uncomfortable arena in which to work; if you've

Near right: Croft's father (Jon Voight, who is, ironically enough, Jolie's father as well) checks in. Bottom: At home in her spectacular mansion, Croft eyes the alignment of the planets.



got too much light on the set, it's hard to see the contrast and feel the exposure. I was lucky on *Tomb Raider* in that the digital-effects artists were fine with us shooting on 79. They didn't ask for the special-effects stock or a slower stock for the greenscreen work, which makes sense to me because it eliminated the need to match the grain, color and contrast of two different stocks."

Croft's adventures in *Tomb Raider* took the crew around the globe to some unlikely places, including Iceland, where Croft races across a glacier on a dogsled. Menzies and his crew chased her with a Steadicam on a snowmobile. "We were very lucky with the weather," he professes. "We were chasing her on these little snowmobiles across the surface of a glacier that was doubling for Siberia on a dark, cloudy day with very low, ominous clouds, but the water and the glacier were the most amazing blue. It was a beautiful location. I shot 48 there, and when the day got a bit too dark I switched over to 79. I like shooting with a tungsten stock all the time, because I feel that it gives me more control. I like being able to pull that 85 if I need to and get a little extra stop." To add extra depth to the scenery, the crew sprayed fog across the surfaces of the glacier and lake near a campsite set where the travelers stop. Because the temperature of the water was so cold, the fog hung as a low mist that added just the right feeling of mystery to the sequence.

The production then traveled to the temple city of Angkor in Cambodia, which is where Croft discovers the underground tomb of the Temple of Dancing Light. "Cambodia was hot and oppressive," Menzies says. "We traveled many miles in deep, lush jungles and came upon those temples, absolutely amazing structures in the middle of nowhere. It was very difficult to get there and we couldn't bring a whole lot of equipment, so I didn't do a lot of lighting around them. Luckily, the

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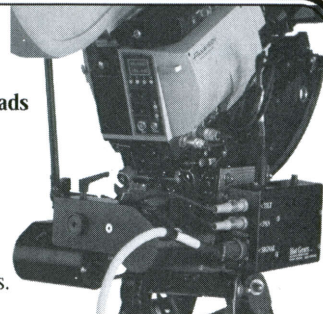


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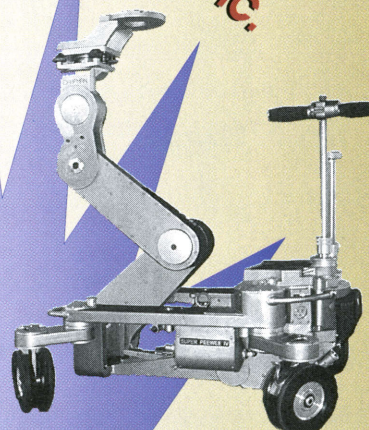
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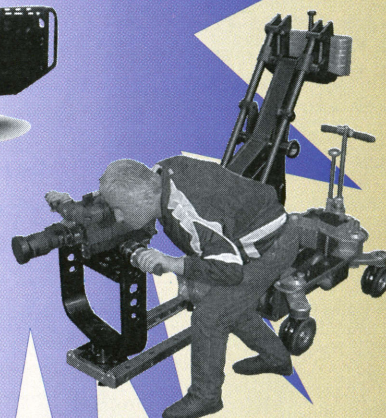
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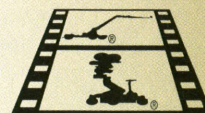
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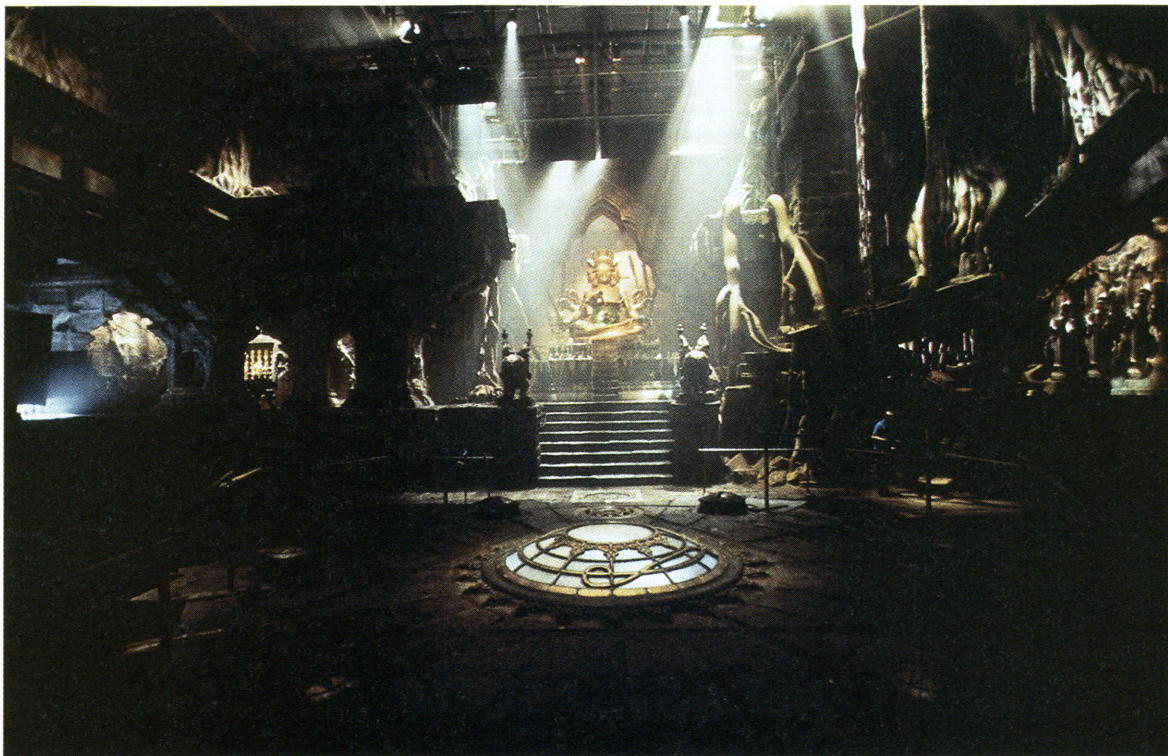
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Wonder Woman

Croft's treasure is this statue, which gives birth to "dancing light" only during key planetary alignments.



people who built the temples did an amazing job of positioning them to be lit by the sun, so we just had to be ready to adjust our schedule to chase the sun around the temples and feature the natural light, which was stunning."

One of the more creative rigs that was employed during the shoot in Cambodia was a vertical camera lift created by special-effects supervisor Chris Corbould. The rig was originally designed to photograph an elaborate "bungee ballet" sequence in the majestic Croft manor, where Lara relaxes by performing a routine of delicate grandeur while being suspended from a vaulted ceiling in a bridled bungee harness. During her routine, several masked gunmen attack her home and Lara must fight them off, taking advantage of her bungee gear to get the drop on them. Menzies asked Corbould to create a rig that would allow him to drop and rise in sync with Jolie. Even in the wondrous expanse of Petrucci's set there was limited room, and Menzies was not happy with the idea of imposing an arch on the camera



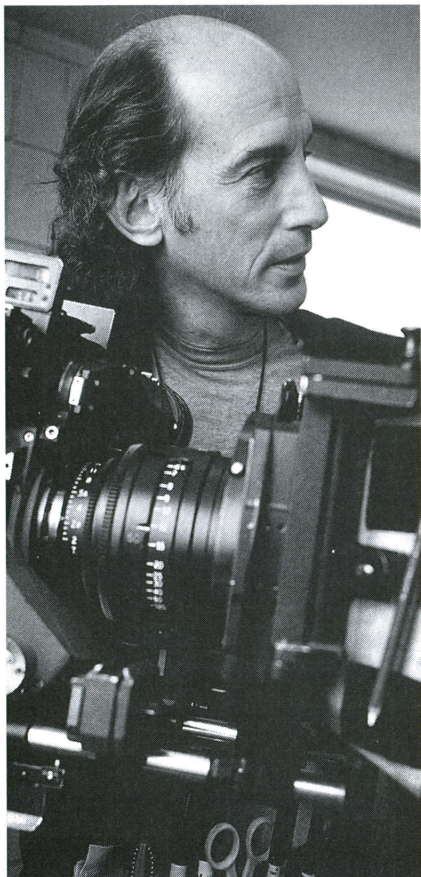
movement by utilizing a fulcrum device like a crane.

Corbould and his crew created a 30' tubular-steel scaffold system with a set of guide rails on the front, to which a camera platform on soft-rubber casters was attached. The platform was then attached to wire cables through a multi-purchase pulley system to a manual-revolving drum, so that the camera could be raised and lowered vertically along the guide rails simply by turning the drum. To further smooth the move-

ment, Corbould added a series of bungee cables to the top and bottom of the camera carriage to smooth the transfer of direction from up to down and back again. The camera was attached to the platform on a Libra three-axis head, which further stabilized the camera during movement. "I wasn't a fan of the Libra before," confesses Menzies, "but I certainly am now. With Chris's rig, we could do a free fall with Angelina and then go right back up with her in the same shot. We pretty much

DP Ed Lachman talks about using Cookes to shoot *Erin Brockovich*:

"*Erin* was my first Cooke S4 picture. Since then, I've shot two features entirely with the Cookes. I even *bought* a set."



Director of Photography
Ed Lachman ASC

Ed Lachman has been a DP since 1975. His two most recent pictures are *Ken Park* (which he also co-directed) and *Simone* (starring Al Pacino) which was shot both anamorphic and in Super 35 (with Cooke S4 lenses).

"For parts of *Erin Brockovich*, we wanted a very natural, almost documentary look," says Ed Lachman. "On some of the location interiors, and inside cars, I let the windows go four or five stops over."

"I had run a lot of tests on the new Cooke primes and I knew what they could do. I was confident those windows would hold. And I knew veiling glare wouldn't wash out the interiors — I wouldn't lose the blacks."

"Even before those tests, I had got to know the S4s. For years, I've owned a set of the old Speed Panchros, so I've been in touch with the factory. In 1991, when they called to ask for input on possible new designs, I went there."

"It impressed me that they wanted feedback from end users and that they were evidently thinking outside the box. When

the prototypes began appearing, they were impressive, too. And when the production lenses arrived, I ran those tests; and I put in an order to buy a set."

"One of the things I had liked about the old Panchros was the *roundness* they gave to the image — a sense of shape that I didn't get from my Zeiss lenses. The new Cookes still had those qualities; and their resolution continued right out to the corners as well as or even better than the Primos."

"Looking again at the *Erin* footage, I still see a smoother transition from in focus to out than I get from any other high-speed lens out there," says Mr Lachman. "And their sharpness is unbeatable."

Cooke
OPTICS SINCE 1893



Wonder Woman

followed every second drop she did very smoothly with the camera. When I saw how well the rig worked, I asked Chris how tall he could make it. He said, 'Yeah, I was thinking the same thing!' When we got to Cambodia, the rig was already built to do an amazing reveal of the temples as Lara arrives. We went from about two feet off the surface of the water surrounding the temples to about 55 feet straight up in the air. It was fantastic."

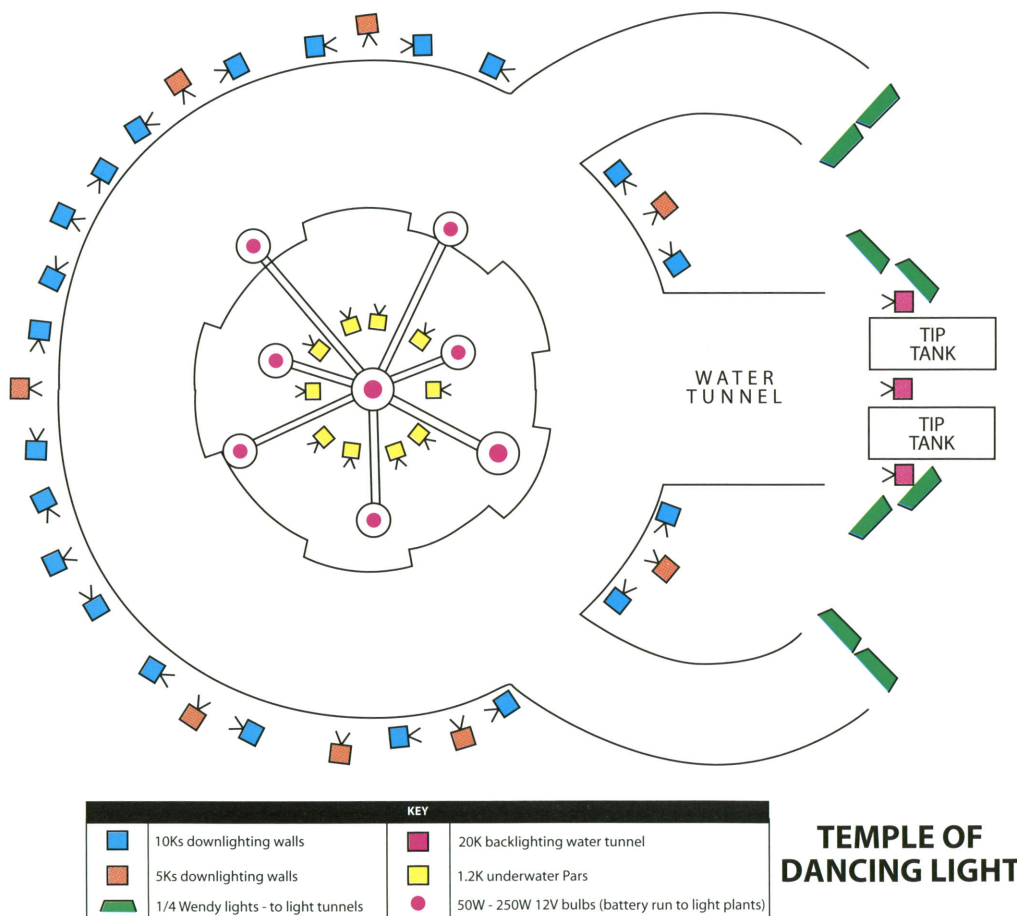
The interior of the Temple of Dancing Light was built on the famous 007 stage at Pinewood Studios. "We took a lot of inspiration from the structures we saw in Cambodia," offers production designer Petrucci, "but we altered them a bit to suit our needs. I like to use simple geometries that then allow us to add just the right touches to make them timeless. Basically, the

most important thing is Lara Croft, and we can't do anything that's going to distract from her. The temple set resembles sandstone and limestone, which can be found in Cambodia, but we've taken a lot of the color out and made it predominantly gray. That's a trick I learned working in rock 'n' roll — if you add 20- or 50-percent gray to a set, you can then light it any color you want and it will become that color. That method gives you a great deal of control over the look."

Similarly, Menzies took a rather minimal approach to his lighting design for the temple set (see diagrams below and on opposite page). General ambience was provided by 12 6K Spacelights suspended from the 60' grid (running at half intensity with only three lamps on). Menzies then utilized a number of 1K Par cans

around the structure to accentuate specific areas of the tomb. A few scattered 10Ks provided hot areas, but general keys were provided by a few carefully placed tungsten fixtures equipped with Chimeras. "I took a very simple approach to this set," he explains. "There's a great deal of action that happens in the temple, and I didn't want to be fighting with setups every time we moved. Given the way we lit the set, we really only had to adjust four lights to turn around and be ready to go.

"I love Chimeras," he adds. "They're great little tools, totally controllable, fast and flexible. I'll use the 40-degree egg crate on them quite a bit, which gives us a lot of control over a soft source without having to put up extra flags or diffusion, and they're very easy to move around. They are unobtrusive to the actor, and if he has to move his mark,



CAMBODIAN TOMB

BRAMA

ARCH WALL

TREE ROOTS

TREE ROOTS

TREE ROOTS

MONKEY SOLDIERS

MONKEY SOLDIERS

MONKEY SOLDIERS

MONKEY SOLDIERS

TUNNEL LEFT TO GO DARK (TORCH LIGHT)

CAMBODIAN TOMB

BRAMA

ARCH WALL

TREE ROOTS

TREE ROOTS

TREE ROOTS

MONKEY SOLDIERS

MONKEY SOLDIERS

MONKEY SOLDIERS

MONKEY SOLDIERS

TUNNEL LEFT TO GO DARK (TORCH LIGHT)

Wonder Woman

we don't have to move a whole forest of grip stands in order to relight. They're sleek to look at and provide a beautiful quality of light."

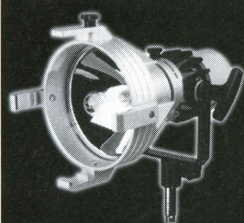
Menzies also worked with a new toy on the temple set: Mole-Richardson HMI Beam Projectors, which were just being manufactured at the time of shooting. Unlike the Xenon, "there's no hole in the center of the beam, you can point them straight down, and they're flicker-free and extremely quiet," he offers. Although most of the lighting in the temple set was fairly neutral, the beam projectors received Full and Half CTS and ¼ Plus Green to give them a little sunlight-through-the-foliage look. Additionally, all of the sources in the temple were automatically stuffed with a double scrim or set at half intensity, as in the case of the space lights. That way, when the second unit came onto the set, they worked from exactly the same light-

ing setup that the main unit had used; all they needed to do was pull the scrims and bring the spacelights to six lamps on to achieve an extra overall stop of light for high-speed work. "Second unit never really has the time or resources that they need to do the work they have to do," Menzies contends. "Making their job a little easier by preparing for them while we're lighting the main set makes it easier for everyone. It also protects me, since we know it won't be a problem to match the sequences later on."

During the story's action, the opposing treasure hunters have a brief gun battle with Croft and then another later on with mystical guardians of the Dancing Light. To accentuate the gunfire, Menzies brought in remotely triggered strobe lights and placed them around the action to fire in a random pattern while the gunfire was happening. "I had never seen the strobe gag before,"

professes Perry Evans, Menzies' gaffer on the production. "I thought he was completely out of his mind, but we set up the strobe sources to fire totally randomly, pointing them in the general direction of the action. The effect is really quite stunning. With all the erratic machine-gun firing going on, you can't tell that the strobe flashes don't sync with the gunfire at all. It really makes those muzzle flashes look very powerful and energetic."

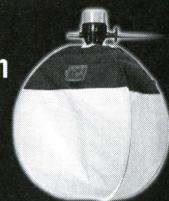
"I learned that trick from [director/cinematographer] Mikael Salomon [ASC] on *Hard Rain*," Menzies confesses. "At the climax of that film, we had a gun battle in a big church where we had no rain for the first time in the film, and it looked rather boring. Mikael suggested a lightning effect with a warm gel to keep the frame alive as the gun battle happened, and he was absolutely right. I've adapted that trick using



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strokes a few times now with great success.”

As *Tomb Raider* moved into postproduction, Menzies and West considered color-timing the film digitally, but they soon discovered that they wouldn't have time. “We're digitally timing a few reels because of all the digital-effects work, but we just couldn't find a facility that could digitally time the whole film fast enough [for a mid-June release],” Menzies explains. “The process can take four or five weeks, and that would've meant spending a month less on the rest of postproduction. We simply couldn't surrender that kind of time.”

Menzies employed the new Arri LocPro system on the show and found that it saved a great deal of time in traditional color timing. “We did a couple of sessions with the LocPro, and I was really excited about being able to freeze the image



Croft's high-flying bungee routine is interrupted when some villains break into her home. However, she takes advantage of her bungee gear to get the drop on them.

in the gate, walk up to the screen, and talk about that still image with the timer before we moved on. That helped to refine the timing process and cut down on the number of generations it took to get the print just right.”

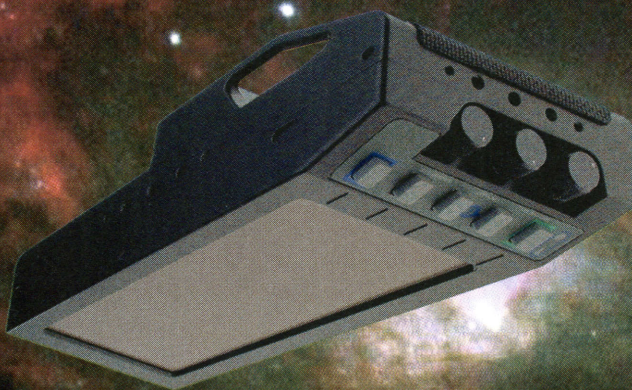
As far as Lara Croft's celluloid

future goes, West promises that the ground is still very fertile. “It's like being in a candy store,” he says. “I've had a lot of fun coming up with ideas about how to send Lara on adventures. We could easily make three films out of the ideas we've had for this one.” ■

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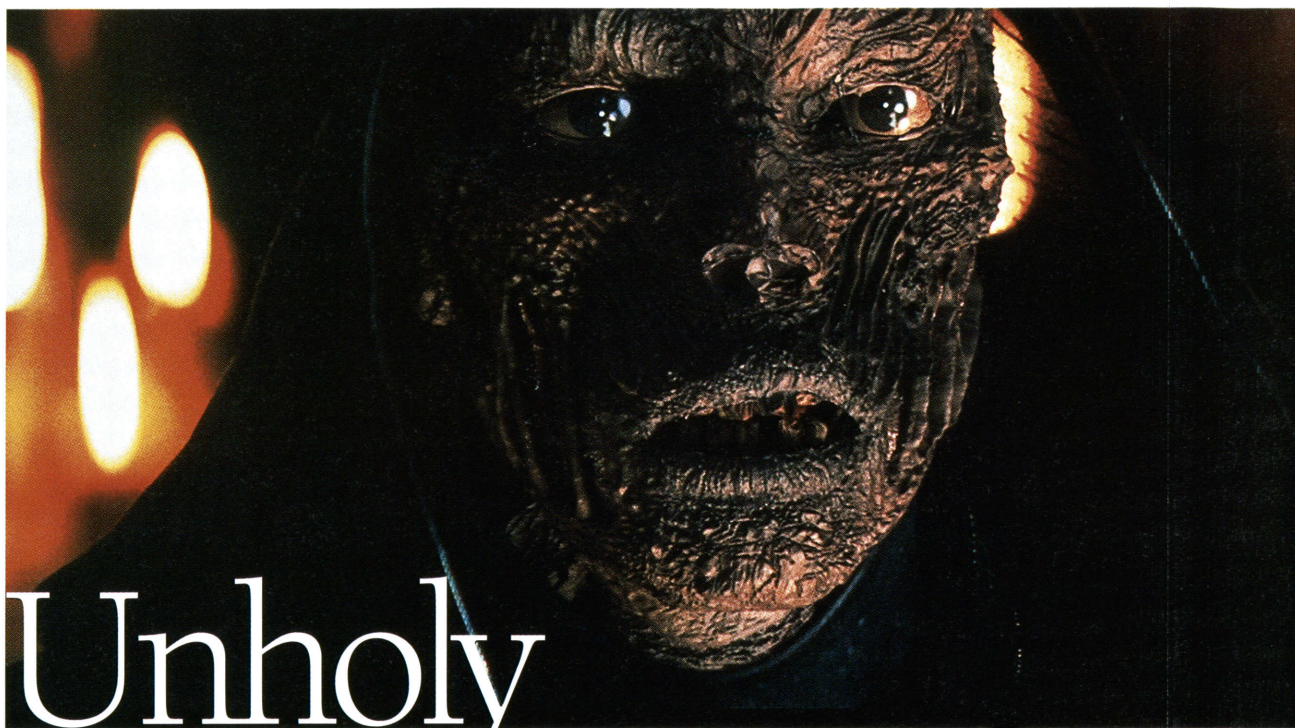
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Unholy Ground

The Mummy Returns lures veteran cameraman Adrian Biddle, BSC back to the desert to revisit a supernatural enemy.

by Kevin H. Martin

Unit photography by Keith Hamshire

After helping inaugurate Universal Pictures' first foray into horror films by shooting 1931's *Dracula* for director Tod Browning, cinematographer Karl Freund, ASC stepped away from the camera to helm *The Mummy*, directing Boris Karloff as Imhotep, the film's title character. Charles Stumar, ASC was director of photography for the studio's maiden mummy effort, whose popularity led to several sequels during Universal's

reign of horror, a period stretching into the mid-1940s.

After lying mostly dormant for half a century, the mummy film subgenre received a shot of adrenaline in 1999 with Universal's release of writer/director Stephen Sommers' *The Mummy*. While retaining the spooky goings-on that typified the studio's earlier mummy films, this updating introduced audiences to Rick O'Connell (Brendan Fraser), a rugged and dashing — though occa-

sionally cloddish — action hero who seemed conjured from equal parts Indiana Jones and Ash, the tragicomic survivor of Sam Raimi's *Evil Dead* films. Coupled with a healthy dose of state-of-the-art visual effects (provided by Industrial Light & Magic, with assists from Cinesite and Pacific Title), *The Mummy* was a worldwide success, mandating, like its predecessor of so many years back, a sequel.

Set a decade after the conclu-

Photos courtesy of Universal Pictures and ILM.



Opposite page: The vengeful mummy Imhotep (Arnold Vosloo) prepares to wreak havoc on his mortal enemies. This page, left: ILM used digital technology to add the pyramids to this atmospheric Egyptian street scene. Below: Cinematographer Adrian Biddle, BSC makes a point on the set.

sion of the first film, *The Mummy Returns* finds our hero now married to his feisty compatriot Evie (Rachel Weisz), with whom he has a son named Alex (Freddie Boath). During an excursion to Egypt, they uncover the Bracelet of Anubis, an eye-catching bangle with mysterious powers. The family returns home to London, where the remains of Imhotep (Arnold Vosloo) are on display in the British Museum. Soon thereafter, Imhotep is resurrected, and his forces descend upon the O'Connells, making off with their child and the bracelet. Rick and Evie pursue them back to Egypt, and along the way are reteamed with her brother Jonathan (John Hannah) and the enigmatic desert warrior Ardeth Bay (Oded Fehr). The bracelet turns out to be the key for uncovering the Oasis of Ahm Shere, a locale where these two warring parties encounter the Pyramid of Gold. Within this structure, yet another supernatural force waits to be unleashed: the Scorpion King (Dwayne Johnson, a.k.a. pro wrestler The Rock), a half-man/half-scorpion. Ultimately, Rick, the Scorpion King and Imhotep square off, with destructively explosive results.

Continuity of personnel between *The Mummy* and its sequel was achieved both in front of the camera and behind it, with nearly all

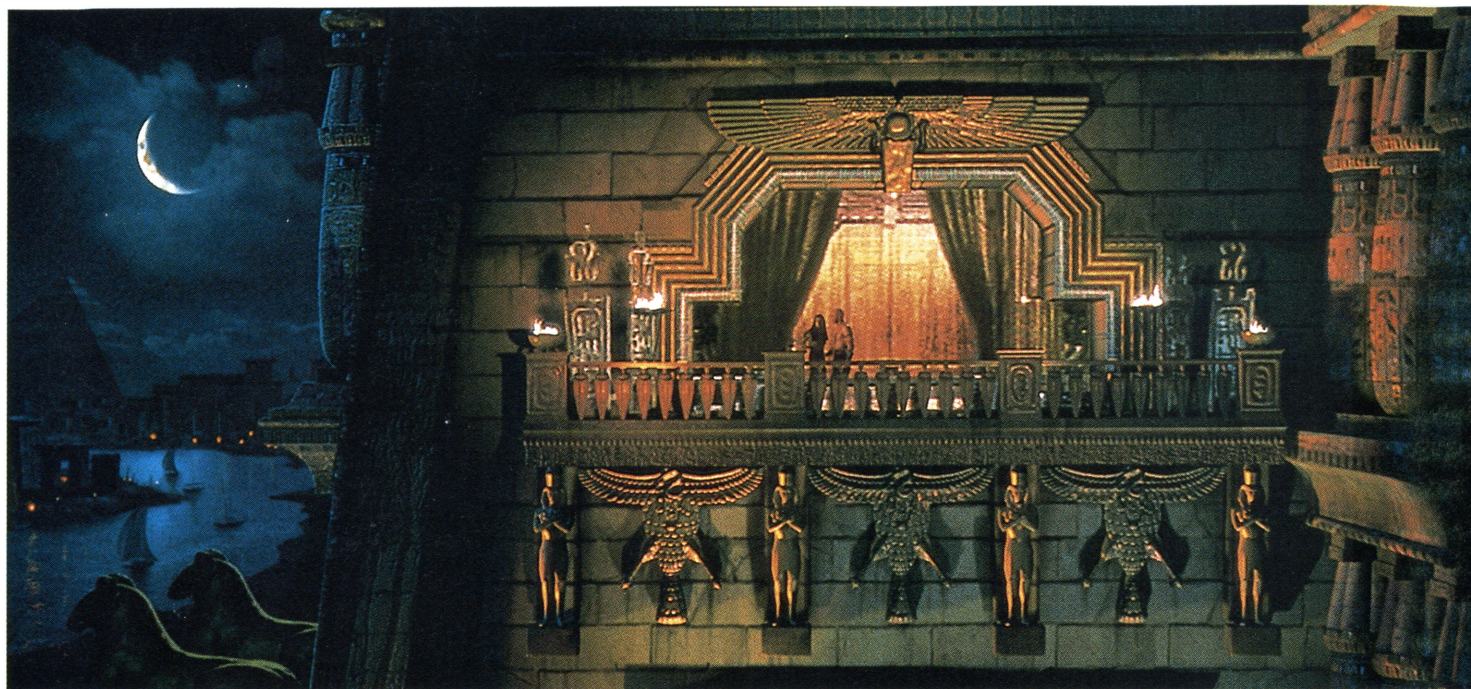
key cast and crew returning for another march through the desert sands. Among them were cinematographer Adrian Biddle, BSC and his camera crew. Biddle worked his way up through the ranks at Ridley Scott & Associates and other English commercial production houses in the '70s, and acted as camera operator on Scott's *Alien* (1979). He proceeded to amass credits as a cinematographer on numerous commercials, then began shooting features in the '80s with *Aliens* and *The Princess Bride*. Biddle's cinematography on Scott's *Thelma & Louise* garnered him Oscar and BAFTA nominations in 1992, and he continued to work on a variety of pictures ranging from comedy (*City Slickers II* and *Fierce Creatures*) to sci-

fi horror (*Event Horizon*, see AC Aug. '97). He won a European Film Award for his work on *The Butcher Boy* in 1997. Since wrapping *The Mummy*, Biddle had logged time on her majesty's secret service for *The World Is Not Enough* (see AC Dec. '99), and he also shot *102 Dalmatians* and the forthcoming *The Weight of Water*.

"This time out, our objective was to deliver more of the same, while also taking things up to the next level," Biddle says of *The Mummy Returns*. "I suppose it was inevitable that the action and visuals would be escalated, but that also meant that the scope of the work increased. Unfortunately, there wasn't a whole lot more time allocated on the shooting schedule for this one, but we overcame that. Familiarity with the



Unholy Ground



In this flashback to a palace in ancient Egypt, live-action stage work was combined with ILM's digital matte work to create a suitably moody and regal ambience.

various team members, due to so many coming back, helped things come together more easily in one sense, so the logistics of the shoot were really the major element we needed to work out.”

With early reports on the production noting elaborate destruction being staged at various U.K. locales, some thought the sequel's premise might be “Mummy goes to London.” Biddle notes, however, that this was never Sommers' intention. “We've all seen stories where the sequel has the action transplanted to a city, but that wasn't the idea here. There's a certain amount of action in the city, but that just serves to drive our people back to the desert in search of the answers they need.”

ILM visual-effects supervisor John Berton, another returnee from *The Mummy*, acknowledges that while there was a certain interest in bringing the mummy to town, “ultimately, Stephen felt that the movie played much better in the desert. The whole London section is just a first act to give audiences a taste of something different. Imhotep's home is in the sands of Egypt and the river Nile. Once you're outside the British

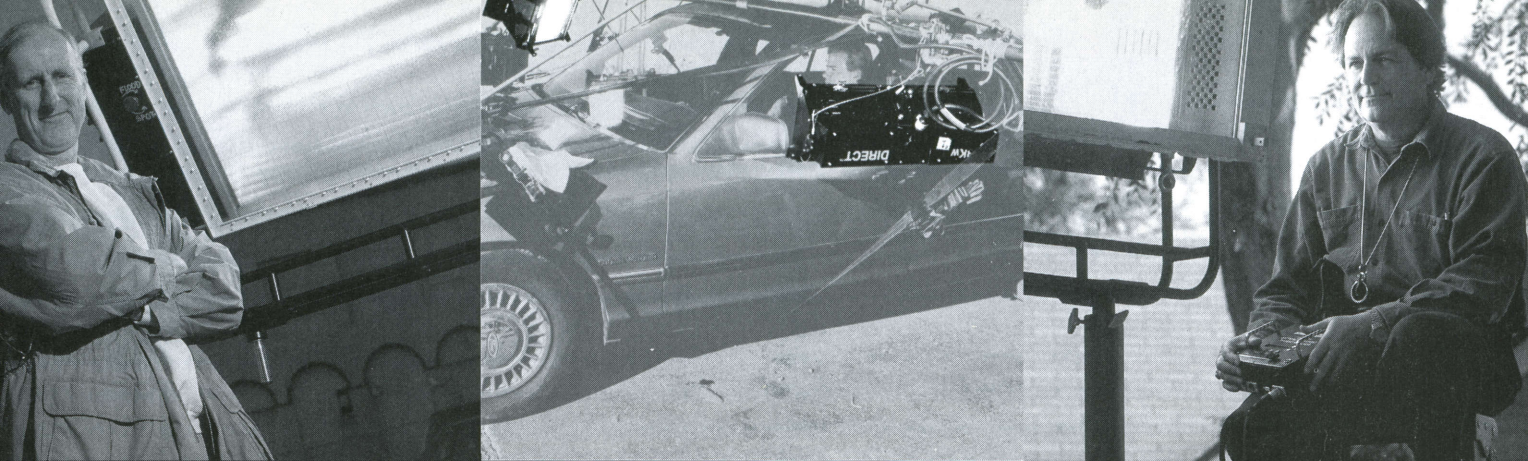
Museum, there just isn't much in London that ties into that [theme]. Even so, we managed to get Rick into a tremendous battle there with the soldier mummies seen in the first film!”

ILM came onto the project much earlier than usual. “About a week after we all realized how big a success the first film was going to be, we were already talking with Stephen about ideas for a follow-up. He [wanted to] take what people liked about the first one and expand those areas — not repeat or replace them, but instead embellish them. We were happy to start thinking along those lines. The aesthetic we used [in both films] was that we were trying to make something amazing and spectacular that you can't see anywhere [else], but it had to be believable to the eye. The viewer had to be able to see how something like that could occur; that's true for live action as well as the visual effects.”

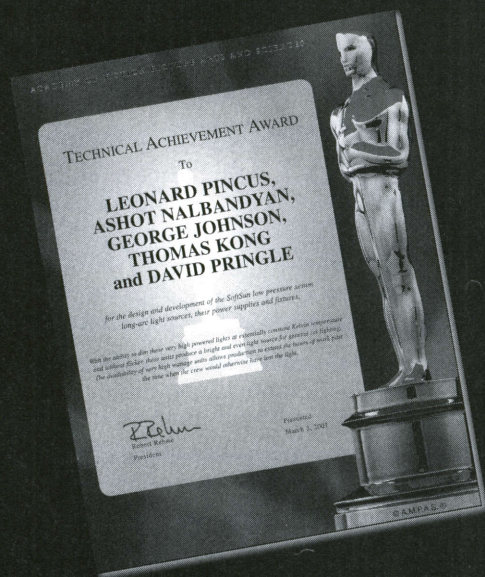
As is the case with many epic cinematic adventures, all parties involved agreed to shoot the film in 2.35:1 anamorphic, a format Biddle had begun using on *Willow*. The cameraman utilized Panavision

Panaflex and XL cameras fitted with the company's C-series anamorphic lenses. “I've tried all of Panavision's other lenses — the E-series, Primos and so on — but I prefer the look of the C-series lenses because of their softer focus and general performance,” Biddle says. “Since they're much smaller and lighter, they are also well-suited to Steadicam and handheld work. Alf Tramontin handled the Steadicam, and he was excellent.” Biddle adds that while he used no filtration on the cameras, he did employ light amounts of smoke.

Shooting began in Morocco and extended to parts of Jordan, with the cinematographer capturing daytime vistas using Kodak's EXR 5248 100T stock. “The Morocco shoot involved locations that differed from where we'd gone on the first one, but the look had to remain quite similar,” Biddle acknowledges. “The color scheme was pretty much the same, with the warmer tones of the desert providing a nice kind of contrast to the London scenes. The lighting plan was a matter of keeping the sun behind the artists when possible, then changing shooting angles as the sun progressed across



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Right: Within the British Museum, Imhotep (looking a bit worse for wear) is revived by members of an ancient cult. Below: In one of Evie's visions, Nefertiri (Rachel Weisz) and Anck-Su-Namun (Patricia Velazquez) fight a duel in the pharaoh's palace. Opposite page: Pro wrestling icon Dwayne Johnson (a.k.a. The Rock) puts his ring moves to good use in his role as the Scorpion King.



the sky during the day.”

Temperatures in the desert sometimes reached 130 degrees, and the shoot was plagued by a variety of intense weather conditions. Some setups required laborious hand-trucking of a Sovereign crane (which, along with a Scorpio three-axis remote head, was provided by Arri Media) up the side of huge sand dunes. While Biddle and his regular team — camera operator David Worley, gaffer Kevin Day, main grip John Flemming and second grip Derek Russell — tussled with weather and hardware, a second unit was also at work, toiling to match the

style set by the cinematographer. Former BSC president Harvey Harrison supervised the second unit as director of photography, as he had on several other Biddle-shot features.

Another small team shooting alongside the main and second units included Berton and his camera crew from ILM. Fortunately, they weren't burdened by the weight of elaborate, computerized motion-control gear. Thanks to advances in postproduction that allow for tracking and reconstruction of camera moves, motion control was nearly nonexistent on location with *The Mummy Returns*. “That was true of the first

film as well,” Berton explains. “We didn't want to take cameras and computers into the desert due to that kind of [electronically] unfriendly environment. Fortunately, the camera operators, who were really good on the first film, had become that much more knowledgeable about the things we needed from them this time out. So when I asked the operator to get me a repeat on a move, I knew that while it couldn't be a perfect match, he'd be able to [come close enough] that I could sort the passes out in post. That kind of efficiency let us get everything we needed without motion control.” Well, almost. “There was a kind of motion-control move we did while in the desert,” he adds. “We removed a Libra mount used to control moves on the helicopter, set that on a tripod and had it do a repeatable action, utilizing its stabilization software. It wasn't your typical preplanned setup, to be sure.”

After spending May and early June shooting in Morocco and Jordan, the production traveled to England. “There was no need to stay on and do the night exteriors in Morocco,” Biddle explains, “because views of the sand pits could be taken care of in England.” In fact, the first glimpses audiences get of the O'Connells tending to an excavation





in 1935 Egypt were, in fact, captured in a Bryant Lane rock quarry. Other caves and underground passages were built by production designer Allan Cameron on stage at Shepperton Studios, repeating the process undertaken on the first film. The production also utilized the Pinewood Studios backlot for a variety of exteriors, most of which were filmed using Kodak EXR 5298 stock.

One facet of the London shoot involved a lengthy pursuit after the O'Connell child has been kidnapped. A highlight in the sequence features the decapitation of a double-decker bus (a gag that probably hasn't been seen in a major feature since *Live and Let Die*), which was staged at Shepperton. The action continues across the city, causing the production to venture out to Tower Bridge. "Tower Bridge has very distinctive twin towers and is often seen in films, to the point that most filmgoers outside of Europe think that it's actually London Bridge," Biddle says with a chuckle. "That was a pretty elaborate shoot, and it proved to be quite tricky, because the bridge could only be closed for three minutes at a time. We'd get ready for a take, close the bridge and shoot, and then minutes later open it back up and start resetting for the next bit." Filming continued on the bridge for two nights,

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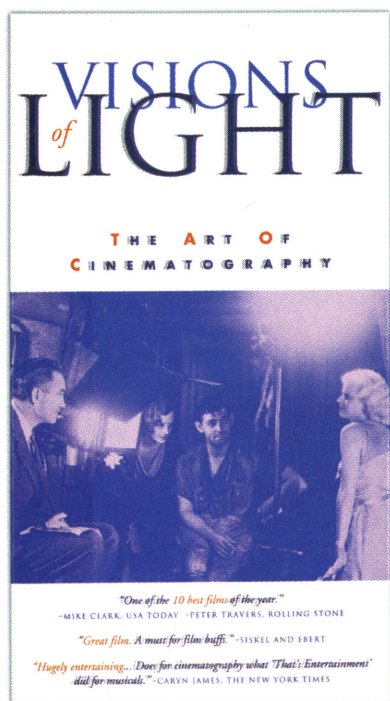
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Unholy Ground

wrapping at 4:30 a.m. each time.

In lighting the bridge sequence, Biddle sought to retain the structure's natural appearance. "I'm always trying to work from the reality aspect, no matter how wild the events. We looked at the available lighting on the bridge, then enhanced it with a variety of units, first building the levels up to a decent exposure, then working toward getting it to look nice." Though he prefers to work at light levels of T4 to T5.6 when possible, Biddle found himself working beneath the desired stops for much of the night shoots. "We wound up at T3.5 quite often as things wore on, but we were using the fast 800T stock [Kodak Vision 5289], which compensated somewhat."

The film's other U.K. locations included Bloomsbury, the University College Hospital (which doubled as the British Museum), and Heath and Reach, a huge sandpit near Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire (which doubled as Morocco at night). Biddle and the second-unit team used all manner of mobile camera units, including Phoenix, Sovereign and Giraffe Cranes, as well as a Super Technocrane, which allowed Biddle to take the camera inside the film's many dynamic action setups.

At one point, our heroes find themselves set upon by a horde of Pygmy warriors, a new form of menace realized principally through digital means by ILM. The action takes place while the characters slog through the jungle overgrowth that is the Oasis of Ahm Shere. "We shot the live action in Black Park, which is a forest close to Pinewood," Biddle reveals. "All of the bog leaf trees in the forest were in full leaf, so we had to use twice as many lamps as normal just to punch through the foliage. As we still haven't cracked the matter of getting Musco lights over here, we wound up using Wendy lights [supplied by Lee Lighting Ltd.]. Even so, when we got 10 feet inside this

area, it became very dark, so much so that you could be next to a busy freeway and not see any evidence of activity. In the end, we wound up switching over to do more of the forest on stage, getting only what we absolutely had to out of doors."

For studio scenes involving caves and other torch-lit environments, Biddle sought to slightly embellish the look established in the first film. "I really hope I did it better this time, but that remains to be seen," he allows. "We brought up the flame-and-flicker aspect just a bit from how they read the last time out. With an on-camera [torch] source serving as a key, I can just bring my light in from the direction of the flame, but there isn't that kind of ready source on hand for me to work from. That's due to the fact that some scripts refer to events taking place in absolute darkness ... but then two pages of dialogue follow! So it falls to us to give the *idea* of darkness while still providing a light source that makes the shot read well. As always, it's more than providing a general exposure, and you want to put things forward in an interesting, cinematic fashion."

While the Scorpion King and his forces provide their own measure of menace for our hero later in the proceedings, Imhotep is far from inactive through the main body of the film. "The character has to think and act and relate to the people around him in a much more sophisticated fashion this time out — and he's still in the desiccated-mummy form," ILM's Berton relates. "He does transition over to live-action Arnold Vosloo about halfway through the film, but until that point, he was pretty much all our responsibility." Having successfully employed motion-capture technology on the first film, ILM utilized Vicon equipment for more sessions with both Vosloo and stunt performers, which took place in London near the end of the shooting in September. "Motion

capture let us bring a real sense of personality through, and this time we had a performer who had become expert and knew the drill," Berton explains. "We were also smarter about capturing the data, and the technology has improved as well."

After Rick O'Connell and his compatriots board an airship on their way toward the Oasis of Ahm Shere, Imhotep calls up the forces of nature against them, battering the vessel with waves of water in a liquid homage to the first film's sandstorm. Atmospheric effects utilized either Maya or ILM's proprietary particle-animation tools, with RenderMan extensions employed to render the particles. Live action for the sequence was photographed on C Stage at Shepperton. "The actors were on an enormous, gimbal-like contraption built by Allan Cameron and Neil Corbould that swung them about, as if they were being buffeted," Biddle explains. "We shot them against bluescreen, using a moving light source that could swing about to amplify the sense of motion. The moving key isn't all that obvious; it's a night scene, and we're just trying to suggest the effect of moonlight."

ILM's major portion of work on the sequence dealt with the vertiginous backgrounds, and featured location platework that was used in a rather unusual fashion. "We shot background plates in the canyons of Petra at Jordan," Berton notes. "Those canyons are about 200 feet tall, but because these cliffs are devoid of vegetation, they scale up very nicely, and we used them as 1/15 scale miniatures, in essence creating a canyon with 3,000-foot-tall walls. We rarely use synthetic elements to give scale to a real object, but in this case we did, adding a river at the bottom in digital to enhance the illusion of size."

Traditionally fabricated miniatures also played a part in realizing structures past and present. "We built

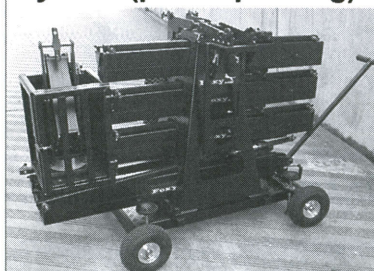
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A Saharan Sojourn

Interview by Dan Reany
Edited by Rachael K. Bosley



Writer/director Stephen Sommers has demonstrated an affinity for the fantastic, whether it lies in the tales told by Mark Twain's characters (*The Adventures of Huck Finn*), in the promise of a treasure-filled lost city (Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*), in the menace of undersea creatures (*Deep Rising*), or in ancient Egyptian tombs (*The Mummy*). Hot on the heels of *The Mummy*'s success in 1999, Sommers reassembled the cast and crew for *The Mummy Returns*. The director, who is currently producing a *Mummy* spin-off feature, *The Scorpion King*, recently took a few moments to tell *AC* what he learned on his second trip to the desert.

American Cinematographer: You worked with Adrian Biddle, BSC on both *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*. What did he bring to the projects?

Sommers: I love the look he gives films — that's why you go with

a certain cinematographer. Besides that, he's fast and we get along great. On *The Mummy Returns*, we brought back something like 98 percent of the crew from *The Mummy*. Our first week out in the Sahara, we looked around and said, 'Didn't we just finish this movie?'

What did you learn while shooting *The Mummy* that you applied to *The Mummy Returns*?

Sommers: Most of what I learned had to do with visual effects. When you see the sequel, it'll be really apparent that we've taken a huge leap forward in the visual-effects department in every way — not only technically, but also creatively and directorially. I figured out how to do a lot of things we couldn't even conceive of before.

Did you shoot fewer close-ups and tight shots because you were going for epic scale?

Sommers: I've always loved 'big,' even when I was back in film school and didn't have two nickels to

rub together. All of the movies I loved as a kid were big. I was one of the few kids who fell in love with *Lawrence of Arabia* in early grade school!

[But] I learned in film school that it doesn't just take money [to achieve visual sophistication]. I remember shooting a sequence where I needed cops. Some classmates were shooting a cop scene that same weekend, and they rented all the uniforms, a cop car, and so on. I didn't have any money, though, so my partner and I ran out and flagged down a couple of cops over by a Taco Bell. We said, 'Listen, if we buy you some food, will you do some stuff for us?' They said, 'Yeah, but we won't pull our guns.' So we bought them Taco Bell, and they raced up and down an alley, jumped out of the car and looked around, and did some other things. On Monday morning, my film looked fantastic because it was done with real cops.

We spent a lot of money on big

shots and big effects in *The Mummy*, but some of the biggest shots were four people on camels in the middle of the Sahara. Those shots cost about a buck fifty — you just had to get up at 2:30 a.m., drive three hours out into the middle of the desert, sit there and wait for the right moment.

What are some of the special considerations when you're shooting scenes that will support massive amounts of CG effects?

Sommers: You actually have a lot more leeway in those sequences. One thing that's really great is that sky replacement is a lot easier and cheaper these days. You still have to get good light on actors, but you don't have to get [such] a tight shot [anymore]. I love beautiful skies, and I love beautiful movies in general. My first feature, *The Adventures of Huck Finn*, was shot by Janusz Kaminski [ASC], so I got spoiled on my very first one. We did that movie for \$6 million and everyone thought we spent \$20-\$25 million on it. A lot of that had to do with the fact that it was so beautiful. If you want your movies to look big, they've got to look beautiful, and that comes down to the cinematographer.

Were you able to stay on schedule while shooting in the desert?

Sommers: On both *Mummy* movies, we came out of the desert right on schedule. I always go a bit over on the soundstages, but I love shooting in the desert. A lot of people would go crazy there, but I think it's a wonderful place to make a movie — it's 130 degrees, cell phones don't work, and no one has a girlfriend, boyfriend, wife or husband there, so they're just focused on making the movie and getting the hell out of the desert as fast as possible.

What are the difficulties of shooting in the desert?

Sommers: It's pure benefit. You can get the biggest shots for free and the most spectacular lighting without waiting for it, and no one



Opposite page: Director Stephen Sommers doesn't seem worried by the large scorpion looming over his back on location. This page: Sommers works out a scene with the very buff (and aptly named) thespian The Rock.

minds if you go a little overtime; after all, what else are they going to do?

You shot most of your exterior scenes between 4:30 and 8:30 a.m. and after 5:30 p.m. on *The Mummy*. Did you follow that routine with the sequel?

Sommers: Yeah. When I used to hear that a director wouldn't shoot after 9:30 a.m. and then wouldn't start again until 5 or 5:30 p.m., I thought it was lunacy. But in the Sahara, you have no choice, unless you want your movie to look like crap. As soon as the shadows go away, the desert looks flat and uninteresting. It's all about shadows.

There was a significant amount of torchlight in *The Mummy*.

Sommers: I love fire and water in all my movies. It goes back to the first time I saw *Frankenstein* when I was a little kid. I loved the scene where all of the villagers go racing toward the castle with torches. I saw it in black-and-white, but to me it was fantastic and colorful. I try to put as much water and fire in my films as possible. When we ran into the underground city in *Jungle Book*, I thought, 'Well, they wouldn't have torches,' so I came up with a way to light the whole thing with aqueducts that were always filled with flammable liquid.

You used Industrial Light & Magic for state-of-the-art CG effects, but you also used some time-tested techniques, such as shooting day-for-night. Can you talk briefly about blending the old and the new?

Sommers: I loved all of the in-camera stuff in the Francis Coppola film *Bram Stoker's Dracula* [see AC Nov. '92]. I think it's a big mistake to just rely on CG — it's expensive, and if you have too much money, you find that you stop using your brain. When I watched *The Mummy Returns* with our ILM guy, we'd look at how much money we had and say, 'How do we make it look like twice that much?' We started out by thinking of things we liked as kids and hadn't seen in a while, like day-for-night, and we brought those things back. I always thought day-for-night work looked pretty cheesy, but if you use it at the right times for the right things, it works wonderfully. And sometimes you don't have a choice. But you have to do it right.

Both of the *Mummy* films are pretty tame for the horror genre. Do you consider them horror movies?

Sommers: You haven't seen *The Mummy Returns* yet! I guarantee you, the Pygmy skeletons are terrifying. We're not messing around there!

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Unholy Ground

continued from page 71

and photographed a number of miniatures for the ancient temples of Egypt and Thebes," Berton says. "We sandwiched plate shots from Morocco between our miniature buildings in the foreground and digital matte-painted backgrounds. To enliven the image some more, there are digital creatures running through the streets alongside live-action people. There's at least one element in there for all tastes!"

The film's climax is a two-pronged affair: on one front, a huge daylight battle takes place between the Scorpion King's forces and Ardeth Bay's army, while Rick faces off against both Imhotep and the Scorpion King in the Pyramid of Gold's temple. The human forces numbered only a few dozen on location but were replicated in the computer by ILM to create a large army. "That was an interesting situation," Berton remarks. "We built an enormous army of CG warriors to fight a live-action army of men on horseback. That meant we had to match to all that went on in the live-action plate in detail. Making CG armies fight against each other was tough before, but that was a slightly more controllable situation than what we faced [this time]. By putting our digital forces against live action, we had to fold them into the middle of a pre-existing image, making sure that atmosphere and dirt interacted with synthetic and live-action figures in the same fashion."

Before any of that work got underway, Berton devised a plan to create a greater sense of interaction while shooting the live-action part of the scene. "When a human being fights a synthetic creature, you wind up with performers landing what I call 'soft blows,'" he notes. "That's because the guys have nothing to strike against. We had lots of stuntmen holding up crash pads that approximated the height of our digital warriors, and that provided the

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Unholy Ground

Our hero, Rick O'Connell (Brendan Fraser) finds himself in a hot spot.



people on horseback with a proper eyeline so they could strike with force at the right position. When we put our digital guys in there over that, there's a real sense of attack, instead of just live-action guys flailing around."

While the enormous desert battle rages, Rick duels with the

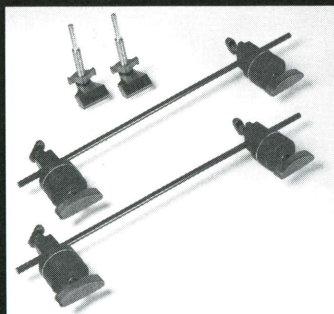
mummy and the Scorpion King. "That whole sequence was shot on H Stage at Shepperton," Biddle recalls, "and it involved huge amounts [of effects] by ILM, which build upon this enormous temple set that featured fire, flame and lava pits scattered about. For our part of the fights, both in the temple and else-

where, we used various time-related gimmicks, altering the shutter speed to get the no-blur look that's somewhat in vogue. There was a bit of speed-ramping as well, which let us change frame rates mid-shot. That could give a character an interesting burst of speed, while also facilitating a blend when cutting from an actor to his stuntman. We might have an actor leaping around and go to slow motion for that part of the shot. Then we'd speed them up a bit from real time for other cuts. That way, when the stunt artist came in, we'd have the actor moving at the same speed, which in reality he wouldn't be able to do. This often happens with sword-fighting scenes, because the stunt people are always much faster than the actors. To help mask the transitions during these fights, we used all sorts of tricks, ranging from shutter-angle and speed changes to handheld cameras."

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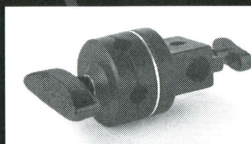
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Special-effects coordinator Neil Corbould handled the requisite pyrotechnics and rigging of destruction on-set. "That was very important to our end," Berton reports, "and all of the people there had come to realize the relationship between the special effects on stage and the visual effects coming later. Working in concert, this made a tremendous difference, because the ability to create interaction with physical objects on set, such as smashing through columns in the temple set, helped integrate our CG creatures."

Berton expressed a strong preference for shooting practical shadows whenever possible on set, again to aid integration. "Practical shadows have a much better look. With real shadows, a key light gets obscured but not the fill, so the light comes from a single direction. When darkening a plate, the highlight from the key is still there, and that's not

appropriate. So I like to shoot an extra pass on stage, working with the cinematographer to flag or otherwise obscure the key light, whenever our critters are coming through the scene. The other way is easier and works 99 percent of the time, but that last one percent will kill you with audiences these days." Computer Film Company also contributed to the climax, digitally augmenting the practical on-set carnage.

Even as the makers of *The Mummy Returns* pushed through postproduction, a spin-off feature, *The Scorpion King*, had already entered production. For Biddle, another epic beckoned, the dragon adventure *Reign of Fire*, directed by Rob Bowman. "I usually try to slot small films in between the larger ones, just to have that different sort of challenge," Biddle notes. "Last year I did that with *The Weight of Water* for Kathryn Bigelow, which was



really enjoyable. When you're working very low-budget, you have to find ways around [problems] and not get bogged down, since you've only got six or seven weeks to shoot. There's more than a bit of ingenuity involved when you can't afford to have all the tools on hand for the solution and must improvise. *Reign of Fire*, however, is another big show." ■

Rick and young Alex (Freddie Boath) race through a jungle at full speed as they try to reach the safety of the Gold Pyramid before sunup.



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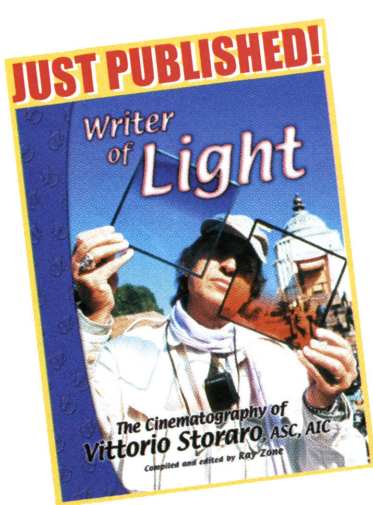
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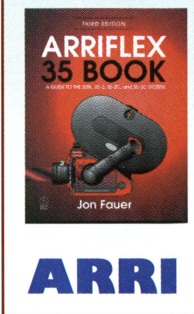
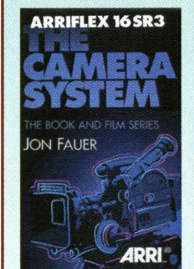
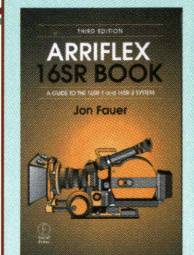
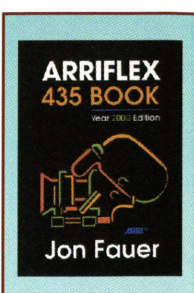
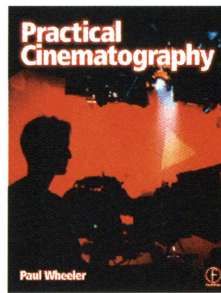
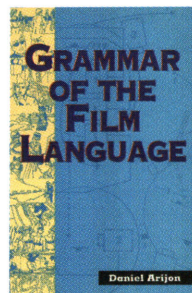
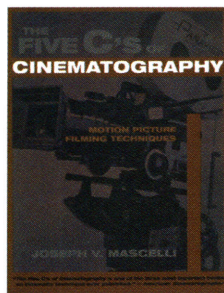
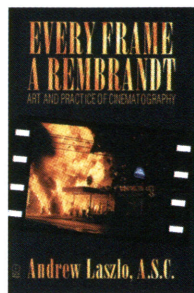
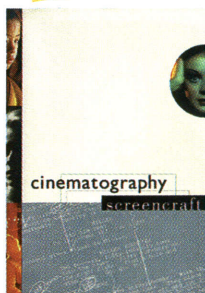


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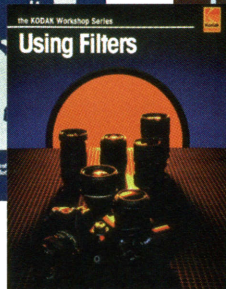
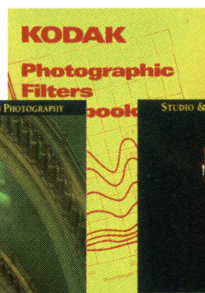
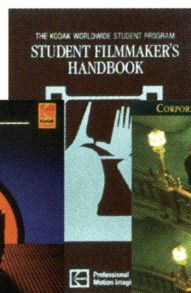


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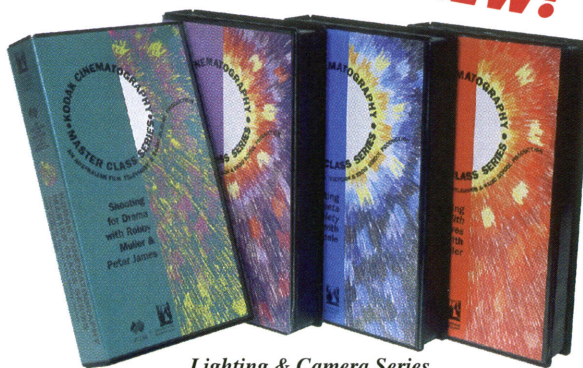


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Memory and Loss

AC conducted one of the last interviews with the late cinematographer Piotr Sobocinski on the set of *Angel Eyes*, whose director recalls his collaborator's creative spirit.

by Mark Dillon

Unit photography by Rafy



Sadly, cinematographer Piotr Sobocinski did not live to see the release of *Angel Eyes* — he passed away in his sleep at the premature age of 43 just weeks before the Warner Bros. feature reached North American screens. Sobocinski had worked with high-profile directors on both sides of the Atlantic, and he knew the grind of filmmaking as well as anyone. However, during AC's visit to the Toronto set of *Angel Eyes*, he enthused that the project "has been one of my most fantastic experiences. Every day of making a movie, you are in a very tense situation for 12 hours. Sometimes it's very diffi-

cult, very stressful, and [the cast and crew] have to keep together. This is really the first time in my life that I'm going on the set with pleasure. I'm waking up and I'm happy, like a kid. It's like a vacation."

After *Angel Eyes* wrapped in July 2000, Sobocinski proceeded to shoot *Hearts in Atlantis*, a Stephen King adaptation scripted by William Goldman and directed by Scott Hicks (*Snow Falling on Cedars*, *Shine*). Slated for an October release, the Warner Bros. film stars Anthony Hopkins as a paranoid stranger and Anton Yelchin as the fatherless 11-year-old he befriends at a boarding house where they both live in 1960

Connecticut. When he died, Sobocinski was one week into production in Vancouver on *24 Hours*, a Columbia Pictures thriller starring Charlize Theron, Kevin Bacon, Stuart Townsend and Courtney Love. The latter film was a reunion between Sobocinski and *Angel Eyes* director Luis Mandoki (*When a Man Loves a Woman*, *Message in a Bottle*). Production shut down for a period, eventually resuming with cinematographer Frederick Elmes, ASC (*Blue Velvet*, *The Ice Storm*) behind the camera.

Tragically, the cameraman's premature passing recalls the early death of the director with whom he

Photos courtesy of Warner Bros.



Opposite page: Director Luis Mandoki (left) and the late cinematographer Piotr Sobocinski prepare to shoot a sequence for *Angel Eyes*. This page: After surviving a car accident that takes the lives of his wife and daughter, Catch Lambert (Jim Caviezel) forms a mysterious bond with policewoman Sharon Pogue (Jennifer Lopez), who helped him at the crash site.

is most closely associated, fellow Pole Krzysztof Kieslowski, who suffered a fatal heart attack in 1996 at the age of 54. Sobocinski was only 30 when he collaborated with Kieslowski on the television movies *Honor the Sabbath Day* and *Thou Shalt Not Covet Thy Neighbor's Wife*, both of which were installments of *The Decalogue*, a 10-part series that the director based upon the Ten Commandments. The pair later worked on what turned out to be Kieslowski's final cinematic statement, *Red*, the third installment of the *Three Colors* trilogy (based on the symbolism of the colors in the French flag). Sobocinski's input was so vital that he received a script-consultant credit on the film, and his camerawork garnered him an Academy Award nomination (see *AC* June '95). He later made the jump to Hollywood and shot *Ransom*, *Marvin's Room* and *Twilight*.

Sobocinski's love for the moving image was part of his heritage. His father, Witold, is a working cinematographer whose credits include *Frantic* and *Pirates*, both directed by Roman Polanski. Even the Sobocinskis' hometown of

Lodz is a cinematic hot spot; each December, it plays host to Camerimage, the international cinematography film festival. The younger Sobocinski was twice a local hero at Camerimage, claiming the Golden Frog award for *Three Colors: Red* in 1994, and winning again the following year for the Hungarian film *The Seventh Room*.

Angel Eyes, Sobocinski's penultimate project, is about loss, fate, redemption, and assembling the pieces of a painful past. Actor Jim Caviezel (*The Thin Red Line*, *Frequency*) plays Catch Lambert, a musician whose life takes a tragic turn when he's behind the wheel in a car accident that claims his wife and child. Jennifer Lopez portrays Sharon Pogue, a Chicago police officer who is first on the scene to attend to Catch; offering words of encouragement, she helps him to survive the ordeal. The film then jumps ahead one year, when Catch, wandering in an amnesiac state, gets a chance opportunity to return the favor. Although Catch and Sharon seem familiar to one another, neither immediately recalls the intense

moment they shared. The two form a romantic relationship and slowly come to grips with their respective personal demons.

The film's pivotal opening crash scene was shot during a chilly May twilight on the King/Queen Bridge, east of downtown Toronto, which doubled for Chicago. Municipal police had to hold back motorists returning from "cottage country" at the end of a long weekend, allowing them to cross the bridge only every few minutes. When the drivers eventually did go through, they beheld the wreckage of a smoking, twisted minivan. Even more shocking was the presence of a young man stumbling zombie-like away from the accident, his face badly lacerated and covered in blood. He approached the passing cars, not asking for assistance, just peering at them menacingly as they sped away.

Of course, the accident "victim" was merely Caviezel, who, for benefit of cast and crew, was deflating the tension of shooting the heavy scene by spooking innocent passers-by. The production, on the 10th of 52 shooting days, was trying

Memory and Loss

Right: Sobocinski uses a portable monitor to show Lopez a video feed. Below: Catch, whose memory of the accident gradually returns to him over the course of the film, tries to relax in a neighborhood club.



to be as inconspicuous as possible due to the presence of the film's female lead — “J. Lo” to her fans — who also happens to be one of the hottest stars on the planet. Lopez, as amused as anyone by Caviezel's antics, would not have been easily recognized in her blue police garb, with her dark hair dyed blonde.

Director Mandoki sat calmly by a video monitor inside a waterproof tent, sheltered from the downpour that rain towers would soon

unleash on the bridge. Meanwhile, Sobocinski instructed his Canadian crew on the setup for the scene. The shot in question, from Catch's POV, involves Sharon arriving at the crash after his minivan collides with a truck. She approaches Catch's window and pleads with him to stay conscious. He locks on her eyes, which provide the film's title.

Dry ice was used to create the fog that is a contributing factor in the accident. Illumination was provided

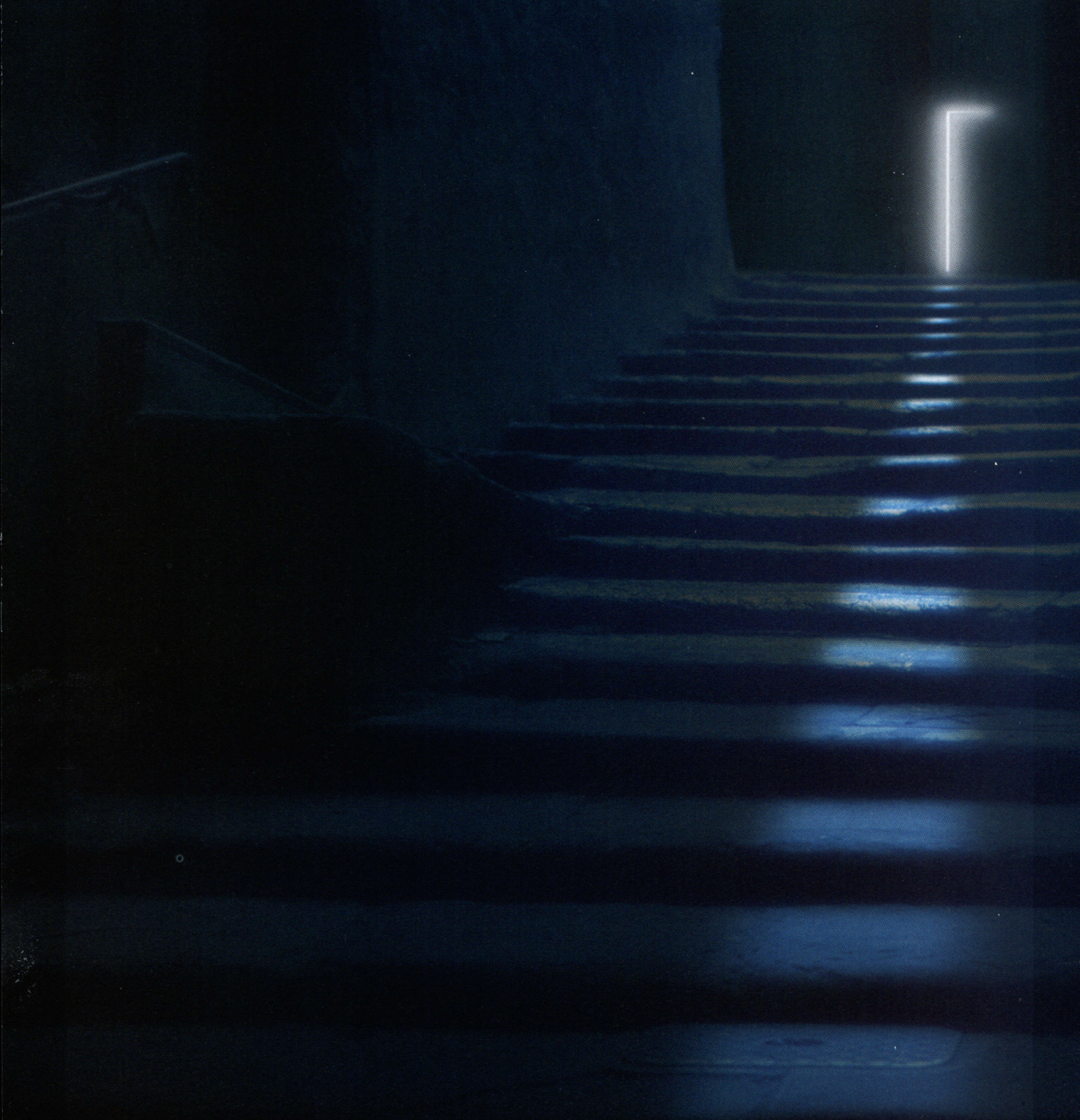
by 6K HMIs on the lower rung of an LRX Dwight Crane positioned in a nearby ditch. The lighting was enhanced by a 2K Fresnel, a “bambino,” and three 2K Blondes suspended from the top of the bridge, with diffusion added by a Silent Frost placed in front of the van. The scene's composition, which shows the view out Catch's windshield and side window, reveals the arrival of an ambulance and police cars, while police extras run about. Also unmistakable is the CN Tower, which the filmmakers would later digitally remove to maintain the illusion of the film's Chicago setting. The sense of Catch's shifting POV was achieved with the camera floating on an Aerocrane inside the van, the side of which had been removed.

The complicated shot required multiple takes as the evening grew progressively darker. Sobocinski regularly checked his light meter amid the traffic noise from the nearby Don Valley Parkway. The crew shared a laugh, teasing Sobocinski for his attentiveness to detail. The Polish cameraman may not have been one of the fastest cinematographers, but he may very well have been one of the most meticulous.

Sobocinski's partnership with Mandoki seems to have been as close as the one he shared with Kieslowski. The cinematographer explained that before he and Mandoki came to shoot in Toronto, they “spent two months in Los Angeles talking about the movie, trying to figure out how to show what's going on inside a man who has lost his memory.” Mandoki reflects that after those weeks in prep, he and Sobocinski “became twin brothers by the first day of principal photography. First of all, there was this incredible friendship, but beyond that, there was this ongoing dialogue; [we were] pushing each other all the time to go further, but with the same vision. We were always keeping each other on our toes.”

The duo filmed the first shot,





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Memory and Loss

Right: The crew prepares to shoot the car accident on a bridge east of Toronto, which doubled for the film's Chicago setting.



in the moving minivan, in a distinct style that viewers would recall when it was alluded to later in the film. Sobocinski noted, "It's a strange shot — first you see a leg, and the camera moves toward it, then we see Catch's wife, then a piece of shoreline, a red lamp and a pole [outside the window]. It's a very characteristic place. We turn and see the skyline, then we just hear the accident."

The crew achieved the shot via a motion-control-style movement executed with a Technocrane peeking into the back of the minivan, which had its rear seats and doors removed. By using that method, the crew could accurately repeat the shot in different environments and still allow the audience — if not Catch — to understand the reference to the earlier incident.

"Later in the movie, Catch is in his apartment trying to put together what's happened to him, and he's really lost," the cinematographer said. "We then use that same camera movement, and we see him in the next 10 sequences with the same movement again. He'll be in the

frame against a lake, and we turn around and see his face, and he's lost, but behind him is the skyline. That refers to the second shot in the movie, which starts on the skyline and then pull backs inside the car to show his point of view [after the accident]." Sobocinski explained that the effect would make it seem as if the filmmakers are providing the troubled character with visual motifs to help him remember.

The *mise-en-scène* of the crash sequence is actually based on a real-life experience that Sobocinski endured. "I had a car accident once, and almost the entire accident [in the film] is designed from what I saw after it happened," he noted. "The pan and fade is how I could hear people talking to me, but I lost consciousness then woke up, and it was suddenly night. In the film, we start at magic hour then go to black, and then come back and hear [Sharon] talking to the camera — to Catch — at night."

Sobocinski cheated death on the occasion of his own car accident, and his feelings from that horrific

event carried over into the fictional crash scene. "Piotr almost passed away [then], but he told me his experience of near-death was very blissful," Mandoki recalls. "As his four friends were dying in the car — he was the only survivor — everything looked overexposed, like white, and he was in a state where none of the human pain, neither physical nor emotional, was present. There was no fear or anguish. We used that experience in the movie."

Toward the end of the film, with Catch's memory returning, the filmmakers show the crash again, but this time with more visual information than the audience was originally given. The crew used a variable-speed, multi-remote turntable to provide an overall sense of what was happening inside the minivan during the moments leading up to the accident. Sobocinski explained, "We put Jim Caviezel in the center of this special 'Chinese table.' Both he and the camera were doing a 360, which creates this feeling that he's inside the car and sees everything. We see the whole family — his child

playing with a toy — with the camera slowly panning inside the car.”

Like the film's opening pan, the 360-degree shot is used throughout the film. Sobocinski employed it again while filming scenes of Catch hanging out at his apartment, a set built at Toronto's Cinespace Studios. Working with Academy Award-winning production designer Dean Tavoularis (*The Godfather II*), Mandoki and Sobocinski envisioned a sparse home devoid of furniture. “At first it's completely dark [in the apartment], and I tried to cut the space with light so it would look like nothingness,” the cinematographer explained. “[The space is] really big, but you don't see the dimensions of it — all you see is him. The 360-degree pan gives you a picture of the whole space, and every time we used it we tried to put a lot of information in the shot. We see him sitting against the wall and the camera pans around to reveal the dark apartment; you don't know where the corridors end because of the lighting, and when we come back he's not there. His apartment is like his [emotional interior] at that point — it's empty. This way we can measure his progress; for example, the next time we're in the apartment we open up the space. To symbolize his [improving psychological state,] we try to use the light to show more and more.”

This concept of a visual arc applied to Sobocinski's use of depth of field as well. Near the beginning of the film, when Catch remembers little, the filmmakers wanted the world around him to seem nearly invisible, so they shot with very narrow depth of field. There are even moments when Sobocinski would alter depth of field in the middle of a shot.

In a later scene, Catch is walking through a graveyard, and because of his improving emotional state — as well as the fact that the filmmakers loved the monuments at Toronto's

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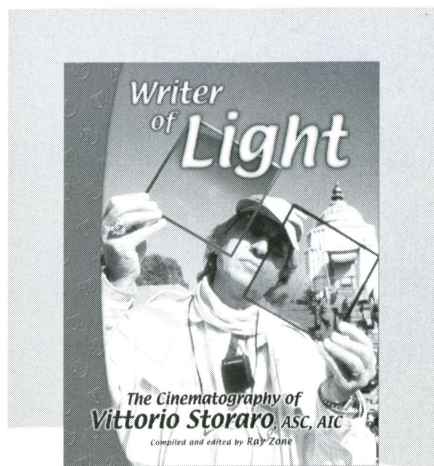
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Memory and Loss



Sharon and her fellow officers take down some evildoers.

St. John's Norway Cemetery — Sobocinski shot with a 50mm lens and greater depth of field to keep backgrounds sharp. Then, in a moment of revelation, *Catch* remembers more and the camera centers on his face while everything else in the frame is thrown out of focus. As the cinematographer observed, "It feels like the whole world around him disappears."

Sobocinski said only the Panavision Millennium Panaflex camera would have allowed him to achieve this effect, which requires manipulating both the shutter and aperture (going over by as much as four stops). "[The Millennium] has a computer that takes care of it," he elaborated. "It's very difficult because there are two mechanical movements, and it has to be synchronized. Also, you have to use it in a way that doesn't look technical — it just looks like something strange is going on. There are important moments in this movie where I had to be able to control the actors' faces when I needed to."

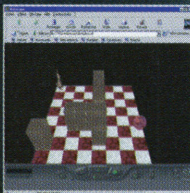
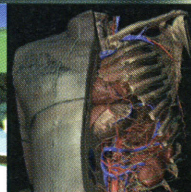
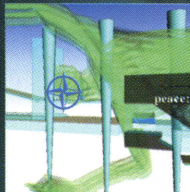
Sobocinski also appreciated the company's Primo lenses, especially considering the different lengths required for the film's various looks. "They are very good, because insofar as the image, every single lens

is the same," he noted. "They are so sharp that you can [diffuse] them or choose any style you want and there is no discrepancy in the focus — they match together. You have a group of lenses of almost the same quality."

Sobocinski estimated that he shot 85 percent of *Angel Eyes*, much of which occurs in cars and at night, on Kodak Vision 500T 5279 stock. Daylight sequences were mostly shot on Vision 200T 5274. He expressed his fondness for the Vision 500, citing its realism and low-maintenance lighting requirements: "The thing [that's great] about those high-speed film stocks is that you can use natural light effects. For example, you can use the naturally lit city as a background, and still have a stop like T2 or T2.8. You don't have to light."

This principal of minimalist lighting extended to interiors as well. For a sequence in which Sharon investigates a dark house on her police beat, Sobocinski informed Lopez that she would be lighting herself. "She was carrying this very powerful flashlight [throughout the house]. I would just determine the spots where I wanted to see her face and have white cards hidden in front of that light to bounce it back," he revealed. "We used a little smoke, but there were no other lights. As she

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Memory and Loss

Sobocinski employed a variable-speed, remote-control turntable to achieve unique POV shots at key moments during the film. Caviezel, whose back is to the camera, receives some last-minute direction from Mandoki as the cinematographer (standing at left) looks on.



moved, we just had to decide how far away to place the white cards — one or two feet — in order to read her face four feet away in the darkness.”

Sobocinski later described *Angel Eyes* as one of his best experi-

ences, noting that it presented some interesting storytelling challenges. “The script offers so much opportunity to use [the cinematic language] to convey things that are impossible to communicate with words alone —

to feel moments that would usually come out as clichés if you used dialogue,” he commented. “We had to explain the inside of a man who’s trying to understand his place in the world, starting with nothing in his head and slowly finding out more. When that moment of total recovery comes, it’s more effective to show it only with pictures — just an actor and cinematography. I think that is what’s most exciting.”

Sobocinski’s dedication left a strong impression on his Toronto crew, including Steadicam/camera operator Peter Rosenfeld, SOC. “You could see his tradition was in crafting perfect images,” Rosenfeld comments. “Piotr never cut corners, and he never walked away from an image that was less than perfect. He was a gentle and kind man, passionate about his work and an extremely gifted cinematographer. I’ll never forget him.”



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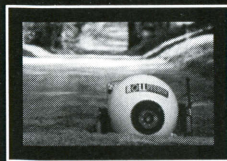
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Mandoki recalls that from the first day on the set of *24 Hours*, Sobocinski "was always saying to his operators and crew, 'We're breaking all the rules in this movie.' He was a lot of fun and very exciting. He was really a genius, because he was always doing new things. He would never sit back and rest on what he had been successful with."

The director recalls two common phrases of Sobocinski's that typified the cinematographer's attitude. When things got tense on the set, he would say, "Don't forget the fun." And when the pair would try something out of the ordinary, and the director would fret over conventional coverage, the cameraman would ask, "Where are your f***ing balls?"

Meanwhile, Mandoki has resumed working on the new film he planned with his friend. "It's tough, because everything around me



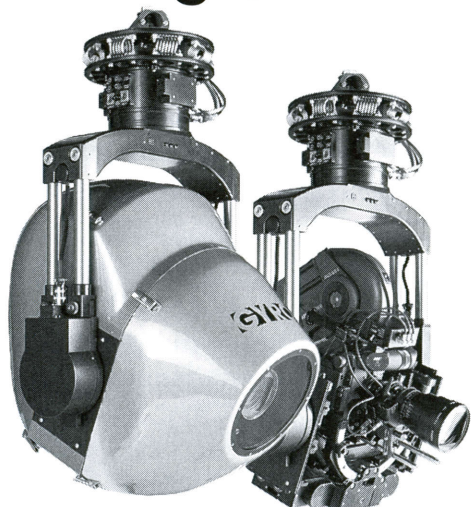
reminds me of Piotr, and I miss him," the director says. "I'm dedicating each shot to him. You take that pain and sadness and transform it into creativity. In a way, I'm carrying on with this partnership I had with him — now I have it inside of me." ■

Sobocinski lines up a shot. In planning the film's horrific car accident, the cinematographer referenced memories of his own near-fatal car crash years ago.

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Images for the Ages

This year's Academy- and ASC Award-nominated cinematographers demonstrated the full range of their mastery in six very different films.

by Bob Fisher, with additional excerpts
from articles by Douglas Bankston, Jay Holben and
David E. Williams

The year 2000's top achievements in cinematography transported viewers to varied settings and vastly different eras, including feudal China (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*), ancient Rome (*Gladiator*), 1940s Sicily (*Malena*), America's Deep South amid the Depression (*O Brother, Where Art Thou?*), the battleground of the Revolutionary War (*The Patriot*), and the high seas beyond the ports of present-day Gloucester, Massachusetts (*The Perfect Storm*). In each case, the results were not only completely convincing but also dramatically compelling, underscoring the impact that a first-class cinematographer can have on a project.

Our annual roundup of these nominated films offers insights into both the technical and artistic strategies that each of their cinematographers employed on the set. Since AC has already covered several of these projects in comprehensive depth (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*;

Gladiator; *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and *The Perfect Storm*), we're devoting most of this space to freshly penned, full-length pieces on *The Patriot* and *Malena*. The other nominated works are represented by excerpts from our coverage in past issues, which are referenced at the end of each entry.

The staff of AC hereby salutes all of the Academy and ASC nominees and winners, who once again demonstrated why cinematography is such a vital and fascinating art form.

*Denotes ASC Award winner

**Denotes Academy Award winner

Caleb Deschanel, ASC*
The Patriot

Caleb Deschanel, ASC established the contemporary standard for artful feature-film cinematography last year with *The Patriot*, a Revolutionary War epic directed by Roland Emmerich. Deschanel

won the ASC Award for his efforts, and also earned an Academy Award nomination for Best Cinematography. Deschanel's ASC Award nomination was his second; the other was for *Fly Away Home* in 1997.

Deschanel was literally a boy wonder when he photographed *The Black Stallion* in 1979. He earned a BAFTA Award for that effort and followed it with *Being There*, *The Right Stuff* and *The Natural*. Deschanel earned consecutive Oscar nominations for the latter two films in 1983 and 1984. By the time the ASC Outstanding Achievement Awards were inaugurated in 1986, however, the cameraman had shifted his focus to directing and shooting commercials, along with a few turns directing narrative films. Deschanel finally ended his hiatus from features by shooting *It Could Happen to You* in 1994, followed by *Fly Away Home*, *Hope Floats*, *Message in a Bottle* and *Anna and the King*.

The Patriot was born around 1996, when screenwriter Robert Rodat and producers Mark Gordon and Gary Levinsohn, fresh from developing *Saving Private Ryan*, decided that their next film would be set during the American Revolution. When Deschanel first heard about the project, he had just spent six months in Asia shooting *Anna and the King* and was putting the finishing touches on that film in England. He felt it was time to go home, but

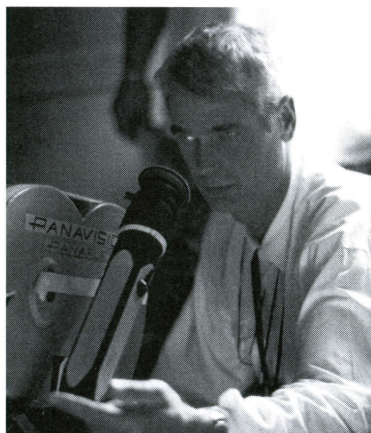


Benjamin Martin (Mel Gibson) is a skilled warrior who is reluctantly drawn into the Revolutionary War in *The Patriot*. Cinematographer Caleb Deschanel, ASC won the ASC Award for Outstanding Achievement in the theatrical-release category, and was also nominated for an Academy Award.

Rodat's script piqued his interest.

The Patriot focuses on a reluctant fictional hero named Benjamin Martin (portrayed by Mel Gibson), a character based on several real Revolutionary War heroes, including Francis Marion, who was labeled "The Swamp Fox" because of his uncanny ability to strike deadly blows and disappear. Martin is characterized as a fierce warrior who terrified the enemy during the French and Indian War. At the outset of *The Patriot*, however, he is a widower raising seven children on a South Carolina farm. In an early scene, Martin is a delegate at a political meeting in the colony of Charles Town (Charleston), which is on the verge of declaring its independence from England. Martin makes an emotional appeal for a compromise with the king. His oldest son (played by Heath Ledger) thinks his father is a coward and joins a rebel militia on the spot. Martin finally takes up the cause in an effort to protect his son.

"I fell in love with the script," Deschanel says. "It's not like many action movies, where the characters are black and white and one-dimen-



sional. The writer had an incredible grasp of history and the underlying issues that led to the war. Benjamin Martin is forced to fight when the British go after his son. That doesn't make him less heroic. He's one of many complex personalities who make this an interesting story." Despite those positive feelings, Deschanel had doubts about some character issues in the script when he flew to Munich to meet Emmerich (*Independence Day*, *Godzilla*). "I had no idea what to expect, but when we started talking there was an instant simpatico," Deschanel says. "He had the same concerns about the script.

He had an infectious optimism about the possibilities for telling a wonderful story."

Deschanel had only worked on one other film about the American Revolution, and it dated back to his graduate-student days at the American Film Institute. He spent a year working on *Valley Forge*, shooting elements in each of the four seasons at Valley Forge Park in Pennsylvania. It played at the park for years. "We tried to get a true understanding of the people, the way they thought and the values in their lives," Deschanel recalls. "Those insights didn't come alive until we immersed ourselves in the topic. The history books said that George Washington wanted the doors on the huts in Valley Forge facing a road. Our Mennonite builders said it made more sense to put them on the other side, because it would protect them from the wind. The superintendent of the park was outraged and didn't want to show the film because he considered it historically inaccurate. Six months after we'd finished the film, though, an excavation at Valley Forge found that the original huts

Images for the Ages



Top: Benjamin and his family are horrified when his idealistic son Gabriel (Heath Ledger) returns home after being badly wounded in battle. Right: Benjamin bids farewell to his youngest child, Susan (Skye McCole Bartusiak), before setting off to join the Continental Army.

were built the way we'd made them!"

During preproduction, Emmerich and Deschanel found visual references for *The Patriot* in such films as *Dances With Wolves*, *Glory*, *The Last of the Mohicans* and a number of John Ford movies, including *The Searchers*. "So much of what we do is instinctual, but there are also universal ideas," Deschanel explains. "There is a wonderful archetypal image in *The Searchers*, where we are looking through a doorway that frames John Wayne as he rides up on horseback. We used that in the beginning of *The Patriot*, when Martin's eldest son comes home after he's been wounded. The family hears a ruckus outside, and the younger kids look through an upstairs window and see the arrival of British troops. The shot conveys the idea that the war is coming close to home. The house is sort of a character in the movie; it's a warm and safe place until the British intrude."

Production was an epic effort involving 63 actors, 95 stuntmen, 400 extras and another 400 actors who portray the opposing armies and militia. They worked at locations in and around Charleston and a community called Rock Hill, which provided a colonial home, a 720-acre living history village, an authentic battlefield, the interior and exterior of the Martin farm, and other practi-

cal settings.

The Patriot is framed in Super 35. Although the filmmakers considered shooting in anamorphic, Deschanel says that he and Emmerich envisioned shooting big battle sequences with multiple cameras, and the cameraman was concerned about finding enough matching anamorphic lenses. He also wanted the flexibility that spherical lenses afford for working at lower T-stops. His camera package included Panaflex Platinum and Gold bodies and mainly prime lenses, though he used zooms on some cameras in battle sequences in order to make quick size changes.

Deschanel says the period was mainly established by costumes, production design and the quality of light. At that time, light came from the sun, moon, fires, candles and lanterns. Deschanel and production designer Kirk Petrucci collaborated in determining windows, lamps and other sources for motivated light. "Kirk built Martin's farm and a nearby town," Deschanel says. "When he designed the Martin house, we planned camera angles from the porch and windows. The layout of streets was also carefully designed, but we were always moving things around to make the setting more realistic. We'd ride a crane, look down, and alter the layout of a street."

The cinematographer also worked closely with costume designer Deborah Lynn Scott. "The textures and colors of fabrics are authentic," he notes. "Townsppeople tended to wear more subdued colors with warmer tones. The British army wore red and green, and the American Continentals were dressed in blue.

"Most of the colors in the film came from nature," he continues. "I don't think there is an archetypal structure to colors in people's minds — green doesn't always represent envy, and red isn't always passion or danger. Maybe that happens at a subconscious level, but I think it depends on each individual's experience."

Deschanel chose Kodak EXR 5248 and Vision 200T 5274 for their rendering of colors and fine grain structure. Because the Super 35 format requires an extra optical step, he wanted minimal grain on the original negative. He used neutral density filters to bring down the intensity of light for interior scenes



shot at midday but supposedly taking place at dusk. He also experimented with various combinations of gels to find the balance between warm candlelight and the blue coldness of dusk.

Camera movement was carefully planned, though Deschanel and Emmerich frequently made decisions at the moment of shooting. "We'd be shooting, and I'd see a look in Roland's eye, which I knew meant

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Images for the Ages

that we should try something else to draw the audience into a scene," Deschanel recalls. "You sort of sense when something isn't working. You ask yourself, 'What do we really want to see?' Sometimes it's all about the actor's performance. At other times, you might want to establish the loneliness of a character in a big setting."

On exteriors, two cameras were usually dolly with the characters. Deschanel also employed an Akela crane with a 72' extension mainly in battle scenes, because it enabled him to reach deep into the action without dolly tracks getting in the way of the actors. "We tried to put the audience into battle scenes on a visceral level by showing them what the characters see and moving with them for a while," he says. "You can't imagine how brutal the battles were until you see hundreds of people lined up facing each other only 75 yards apart, firing guns. It seems horrific today."

One camera was usually on a wider shot with the other one tighter; in other situations, they were covering different angles, but always from the same direction so that the lighting would be consistent for editor David Brenner. About half of the scenes were interiors, which were usually filmed in tight spaces with one camera.

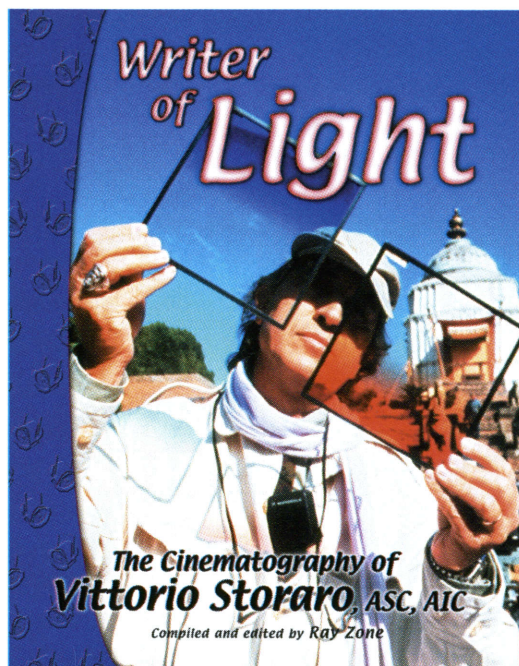
The cinematographer also collaborated closely with visual-effects supervisor Stuart Robertson. "The Patriot is not what you would normally call a visual-effects film, but there were scenes we couldn't do any other way," Deschanel says. "The first battle sequence was a real eye-opener, because the production spent a lot of time training extras. It was really important for the British troops, in particular, to look and feel precise. We were covering the scene with nine cameras and watching on video monitors. We got a lot of coverage that looked good, but when we saw the dailies we realized that some of the soldiers were looking

around from side to side. It just didn't feel precise. That altered the way we trained extras and staged subsequent battle scenes."

Most of those additional battle sequences were filmed in the 65mm format with 600 to 800 extras. The film was scanned and converted to a digital format, and Robertson then replicated the actors and created believable composites that made it seem like 2,000-3,000 people were engaged in battle. Robertson also added CG cannonballs and explosions to battle scenes, and he supervised the shooting of model ships that were digitally composited with background plates. "There's a three-dimensional quality to models that you don't get with today's CG technology," Deschanel observes. "We also filmed characters doing chores against a greenscreen. Later, they were composited on the deck of the miniature ships or used as cutaways with background plates. My crew did some of the greenscreen shots, and others were filmed by a second unit led by Ueli Steiger [ASC]."

While the film's effects work was substantial, it was mainly background for a character-driven story. "Roland gave all of the main characters and supporting cast memorable moments, so the audience understands who they are," Deschanel observes. The cameraman also played a role by vividly establishing the characters' perspectives. For example, when Martin is moving stealthily through the woods before an attack, the smooth movement of the camera and POV shots show the audience what he is experiencing, amplifying the emotional content.

The feeling is often tactile, especially in the big battle scenes, where Deschanel used the Akela crane more like a dolly, often placing it at eye level or slightly higher. "We'd design scenes where characters are walking straight at us," he says. "We pan, and then the camera rises eight to 10 feet and we see masses of



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Images for the Ages



This page: Watching *Malena* (Monica Bellucci) take leisurely strolls around town is a favorite pastime for local boys in the World War II drama *Malena*. Opposite page: Cinematographer Lajos Koltai, ASC earned his first Academy Award nomination for his work on the film, his second collaboration with director Giuseppe Tornatore.

British troops in the background. One big battle sequence takes place on a hillside by a river. We set the Akela up at the top of a hill and dropped it down one side to the waiting troops. Then we'd crane back up with the American troops who were attacking the British. You see the scene from their perspective, with the camera moving with Martin and the soldiers as he runs up the hill and into the British troops."

Emmerich frequently used smoke for ambience in battle scenes, and Deschanel notes there were sometimes inconsistencies in the way it drifted. For instance, he'd be shooting a scene with smoke in which troops were firing their guns, and pretty soon there would be a cloud of black smoke from the guns, which would affect the exposure level. "We used a remote-control device that Howard Preston manufactures to make instant changes in T-stops with microwave transmission," he says. "We call it Elvis, but it's called FI&E. It was rigged so my assistant could instantly change the stop."

Deschanel concludes, "We didn't glamorize the revolution. People do horrible things in war. We tried to explore what drove them while also making an entertaining and exciting film."

— Bob Fisher

Lajos Koltai, ASC *Malena*

A dream came true for Lajos Koltai, ASC when his cinematography peers in the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences nominated *Malena* for an Oscar. He recalls being a student at the Drama and Film School in Budapest some 35 years ago, when Vilmos Zsigmond, ASC would send Gyorgy Illes, head of the cinema department, a monthly copy of *American Cinematographer*. "We were all very eager to read about the cinematographers in Hollywood and the films they were making," he recalls. "I remember feeling very proud when I saw Vilmos's picture on the cover. People told me I was wasting my time worrying about such things. [They said] I would never have those three letters, ASC, after my name."

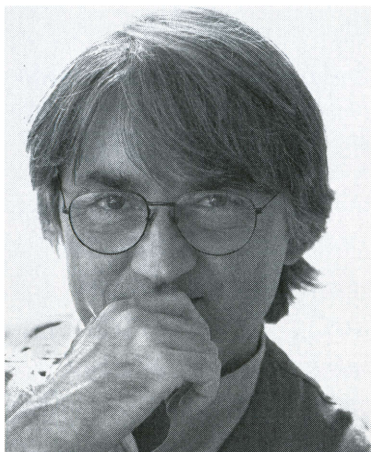
Malena is a sensitive and sensuous story about the relationship between a woman and an adolescent boy who are brought together by circumstance. The story begins in 1940 and is set in a village in Sicily. Malena (Monica Bellucci) is an enigmatic schoolteacher who draws a crowd of leering teenagers during her languorous strolls through the village but is oblivious to the attention. One of the boys is

12-year-old Renato (Giuseppe Sulfaro); like the other boys, he initially admires Malena and fantasizes about her from a distance. The story becomes more complicated when Malena's husband disappears into the abyss of war and is presumed dead.

Soon, the local women are spreading poisonous gossip about the reclusive Malena. She is forced to leave her teaching job and subsequently dates German soldiers. When the Germans are driven out of Sicily and the Americans soldiers arrive, the locals shave Malena's head and force her out of town. But the story doesn't end there.

Writer/director Giuseppe Tornatore (*Cinema Paradiso*) adapted *Malena* from a story by Luciano Vincenzoni. The film is Koltai's second collaboration with Tornatore, following the 1998 film *The Legend of 1900*. The cinematographer read the script only about a month before production was slated to begin in Siracusa, a village in Sicily. He met with Tornatore in Rome, but the director still hadn't cast Renato, and he wasn't ready to talk about his visual ideas. Line producer Mario Cotone encouraged Koltai to draw on his understanding of Tornatore's sensibilities to craft a plan for visualizing the story.

Koltai visited Siracusa with production designer Francesco Frigeri to scout locations. He brought a lot of still pictures back to Budapest and began planning how he was going to shoot the film. By then, a decision had been made to frame the story in the 2.35:1 anamorphic format. Panavision's Phil Radin assured Koltai that he could assemble an anamorphic lens package on relatively short notice. "We wanted to frame this story on a wide screen, so we could show the scope of the village and distance Malena from the boys as she is approaching them," Koltai says. "I preferred the character that you get with anamorphic lenses



to [the quality of] Super 35.”

Malena was produced in Italian and features subtitles, but there are many long scenes in which facial expressions, body language and Koltai’s images supplant the need for dialogue. Koltai met the principal cast just days before production began; the only tests he had time to shoot were some close-ups of faces in the Panavision office in Rome.

Tornatore began each day with a handwritten shot list. He had a plan for every scene that included the way he wanted the camera to move, which Koltai translated into rhythmic camerawork. For example, when *Malena* leaves her house outside the city and walks toward where the boys are hiding, the youths move with her, grabbing glances from different angles and directions and getting closer as she approaches the square. A lot of the important action happens in the square. The ground was made of white stone, which Koltai used as a reflective surface for soft bounce light.

“It was important to film Monica in the best possible light, because she always had to be gorgeous and seductive,” Koltai says. “Giuseppe was very good about that. If I told him the light wasn’t right, he would say, ‘Okay, let’s shoot something else today.’ He is a visual thinker and a photographer, so he understood why it was important if I



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The 12-year-old Renato (Giuseppe Sulfaro), forms a special attachment to Malena.



suggested that we needed to shoot an exterior scene at 8 a.m.”

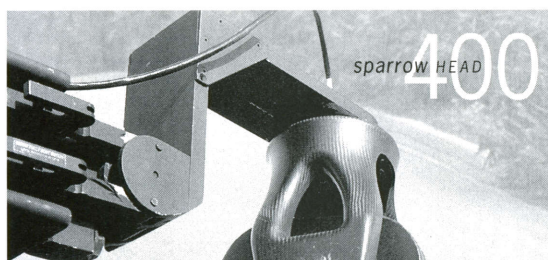
Malena features a large ensemble cast, and the village square where most of the exterior cinematography occurs was usually crowded. Most of the characters in the town were dressed in dark outfits, with many of the men in black or brown suits and white

shirts. “We had a fantastic costume designer, Maurizio Millenotti, one of the best in Italy,” Koltai enthuses. The goal was to create the impression of the period with clothing and architecture that was appropriate for Italy during the 1940s.

“There were often extreme ranges of contrast,” Koltai notes. “That might have been a problem

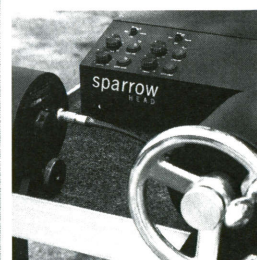
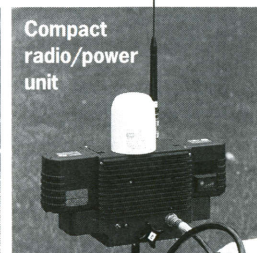
years ago, but today’s [Kodak] Vision films are designed to handle that. There are times when Malena walks toward the camera in the sunlight and the boys are hiding in shadows, and by the end of the shot she has moved into a much darker area in the square. We had as much as a four-stop change in the light on her.” Koltai controlled the stop himself with a handheld remote-control device, trusting his eye and knowledge of the film stock (Kodak Vision 200T 5274) rather than the video tap. The film was processed at Cinecitta Labs in Rome.

“We used multiple cameras in the square because it was so big and so many things were happening,” he says. “People were standing in the doorways of the church, shops and other buildings. We needed two cameras just to capture the reactions as Malena moved into the square. One of the cameras was



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usually on a big crane, like a Giraffe, while the other was on a Panther, because Giuseppe liked to keep the cameras moving. Sometimes we had a third camera, as in the scene when the Americans enter the town; [for that sequence,] we had one camera on top of the church and another on a jeep.”

Koltai says that Tornatore preferred Panavision’s Primo anamorphic lenses, although they carried a mix ranging from 20mm primes to 600mm long lenses. Radin explains that Panavision provided Koltai with “anamorphized” Nikon 600mm and Canon 300mm telephoto lenses that allowed the cinematographer to go deep into scenes and shoot intimate portraiture at appropriate moments. “The different lens sizes are like verbs in Giuseppe’s language,” Koltai observes. “He builds up scenes one shot at a time, like an architect designing a building

one brick at a time. Sometimes he’d tell me, ‘I just want to see his eyes,’ so we’d use a very long lens.”

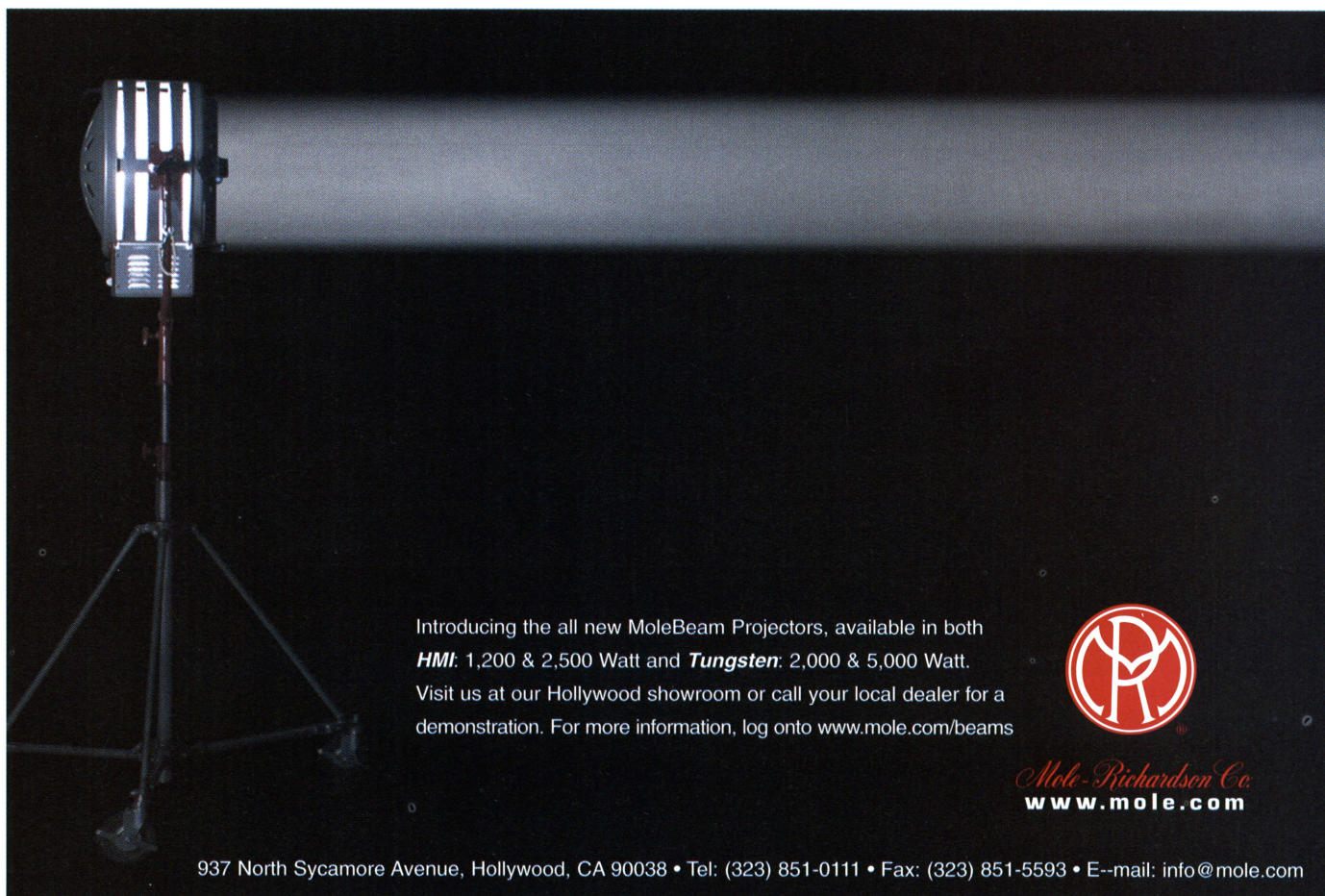
Koltai usually had a 6K front-light at the end of the square as Malena approached the camera. The light bounced off the walls, creating a soft ambience. “We wanted to capture the feeling of Sicily. The dominant color was kind of a brownish yellow that mainly came from the light reflecting off the stone,” he says. “I wanted the light on her to be very warm and soft, as natural as possible. We were fighting the sun the whole day. You can’t always work as fast as you want with 300 to 400 people on the square, because even on close-ups you have layers of background.

“It was similar to planning how you’d fight a battle in a war,” he continues. “I knew that between 12 and 1 p.m., the sun would be exactly behind the tower of the church, cast-

ing a shadow. We tried to plan our shots based on what was predictable.”

Overall, Koltai took a painterly approach to lighting. Some important shots were staged inside the church, where the only source of light was through the windows which were small, high and covered with stained glass. Koltai used a few small balconies to hide lights, creating the impression that shafts of light were coming through windows that didn’t exist. Koltai created a late-afternoon mood with lines of shadows falling on the floor, seemingly created from iron bars covering the windows.

Malena takes place during a time when the war caused frequent blackouts in Sicily. Flashlights were banned, and citizens would carry small iron containers with hot coal that created a dim red light. Koltai used a small, battery-powered light



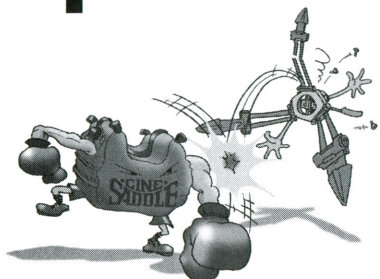
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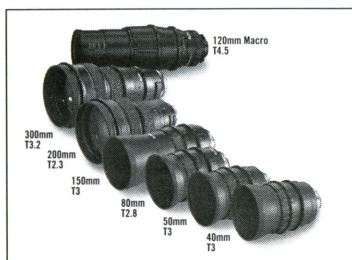
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with a red filter to simulate the look of burning coal. He used a small dimmer to control the intensity of the red glare in very dramatic night scenes.

Parts of *Malena* were filmed in Morocco, where the company constructed Malena's house near the Mediterranean shore. The structure had no roof, so Koltai had considerable freedom for controlling lighting. He notes that there was a discernable difference between in the quality of daylight in Sicily and at the Moroccan location. "I never really understood why the Dutch masters' paintings were so different from those by Italian masters until I visited Holland for the first time," he recalls. "There was a huge storm when the taxi brought me into the city, and right after the storm, the sun came out. Everything was very wet. I saw how fantastic and different the light was. That was the secret of why the paintings are so different." Koltai adjusted for the light differences by eye and during color timing at Cinecitta.

While photographing night scenes at Malena's house, Koltai sometimes found his light meter reading zero. He used Kodak Vision 500T 5279 stock for night scenes and interiors, slightly overexposing it at 400 to get a denser negative. "For my eye, that was the right

moment," he says. "You can feel the shore there in the darkness; it's almost touchable. We used three huge Condors with just one source on each, because if we had used two we would've had a shadow. I wanted this house to feel special; there's no light coming from the houses and no light on the street."

Koltai says that unlike many contemporary directors, Tornatore stationed himself at the camera so he could see the actors and environment with his own eyes rather than depending on the more limited scope of the monitors in the "video village." He would call for moves and lenses, relying on Koltai not only to execute his vision, but also to nudge it in different directions when appropriate or necessary.

— Bob Fisher

Peter Pau, HKSC**

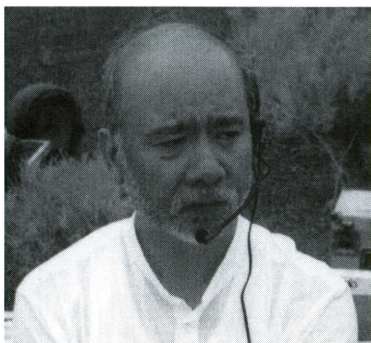
*Crouching Tiger,
Hidden Dragon*

Peter Pau, HKSC struck gold when he signed on to shoot Ang Lee's romantic martial-arts epic *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. The cinematographer's thrilling, gravity-defying images earned him not only the Academy Award for Best Cinematography, but also his first ASC Award nomination.

A Hong Kong native, Pau



Photos by Chan Kem Chuen, courtesy of Sony Pictures Classics.



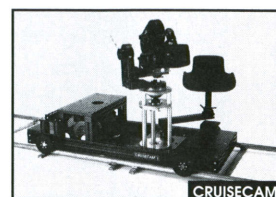
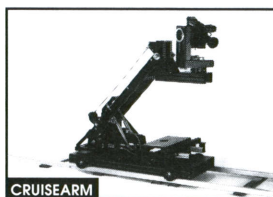
Cinematographer Peter Pau, HKSC (above) won the Academy Award and earned his first ASC Award nomination for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. Opposite page: Jen Yu (Zhang Ziyi) takes on some bandits in the desert.

earned a bachelor's degree in film from the San Francisco Art Institute before amassing a body of work that includes such films as *The Bride With White Hair*, *The Phantom Lover*, *Warriors of Virtue* and *Bride of Chucky* (all directed by Ronnie Yu); *Misty* (which Pau also directed); *Double Team*; *Dracula 2000*; and John Woo's cult classic *The Killer*. Pau has received three Hong Kong Film Awards for his work.

On *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, Pau abandoned his expertise with elaborate, richly colored lighting, which he had used to great effect on other fantasy films, explaining that this type of dynamic look "did not work for *Crouching Tiger* because the storytelling approach was very dramatic; using those techniques would have overdramatized the film and taken the audience out of the story and away from the characters. Instead, we wanted a look that was realistic and comfortable, so the first thing I discussed with Ang was using a low-contrast visual approach with saturated colors."

Pau and Lee also broke from the established aesthetic of martial-arts movies by framing their fantasy not in the standard 1.85:1 ratio, but in the Super 35 widescreen format — which they felt would best serve the picture's dramatic scenes, particularly the sweeping flashback

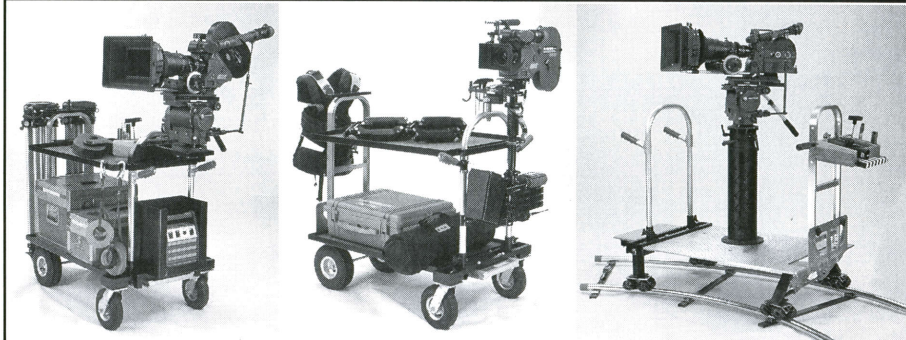
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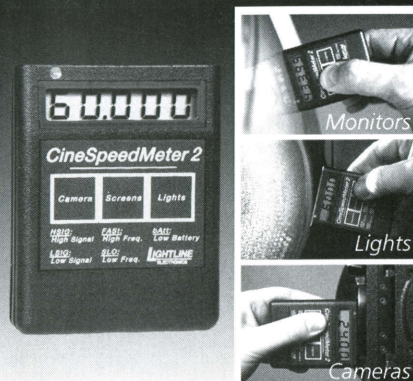
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sequence filmed in the China-Xinjiang Desert. Pau stresses that the geography of the film's landscapes — mountains, forests and desert — was key to the drama. "While anamorphic is beautiful in wide shots, as soon as you move into medium shots or close-ups, the scenery and environment disappear because of the lack of depth of field. Only Super 35 could give us both the wide frame and the depth we needed for the geography as well as the fight scenes, because it would have been difficult to carry the focus for many of them, especially since most take place at night."

According to Pau, Lee adjusted his vision of the fight sequences to fit the wide frame: "While talking about the style of fighting he wanted, Ang was interested in trying to get closer to the action. Fight choreographers always want wider shots from high and low angles because they help sell the action, but Ang said he wanted the audience to feel as if they could join in with the action. He wanted [viewers] to be watching from an arm's length."

This strategy was achieved to spectacular effect with the help of extensive wirework stunts supervised

Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC earned nominations from the ASC and the Academy for *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, which stars (below, from left) George Clooney, Tim Blake Nelson and John Turturro as prison escapees.

by legendary action coordinator Yuen Wo-Ping, who had previously demonstrated his mastery on *The Matrix*. "We had to determine what kind of combat we would be using — fighting with flying stunts or just fistfighting," Pau recalls. "Ang wanted flying; he dreamed of it."

For full coverage of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, see AC Jan. '01.

— David E. Williams

Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC
O Brother, Where Art Thou?

British cinematographer Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC, earned his fourth ASC Award nomination and his fourth Academy Award nomination for *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, his fifth collaboration with sibling filmmakers Joel and Ethan Coen. Deakins' previous ASC and Oscar



Photos by Melinda Sue Gordon, courtesy of Touchstone Pictures.

nominations were for *Kundun* (1997; see AC Feb. '98), *Fargo* (1996) and *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994); he won the ASC Award for the latter film. The diverse cameraman has compiled feature credits on both sides of the Atlantic, among them *Sid and Nancy*, *Stormy Monday*, 1984, *Dead Man Walking*, *Courage Under Fire* and *The Hurricane*.

The Coens envisioned a dry, dusty location in the Deep South for *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, a period comedy about a trio of prisoners (played by George Clooney, John Turturro and Tim Blake Nelson) who stage a not-so-great escape. They eventually chose Mississippi, and Deakins knew from experience that the region would be extremely green, lush and wet during the summertime shoot. (He had shot *Passion Fish* in Louisiana and *The Long Walk Home* in Alabama.) "I had to find a way to desaturate the greens and give the images we were going to shoot the feeling of old, hand-tinted postcards, which was the look favored by Joel and Ethan," Deakins told AC.

After shooting test footage at Griffith Park in Los Angeles and conducting a series of tests at Deluxe, Deakins finally opted to scan the entire film into digital format, manipulate the colors, and record the results back out to film. He spent 10 weeks fine-tuning the film's look in a digital suite at Cinesite. "In the end, we kept the manipulation to a minimum in order to maintain quality overall," he reported. "We affected the greens and played with the overall saturation, but little else." Deakins found that the digital-intermediate process still has a few wrinkles, and he cautioned that "the process is not a quick fix for bad lighting or poor photography; it's a tool to be used in the same way as any other tool."

For full coverage of *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, see AC Oct. '00.

— Bob Fisher

John Mathieson, BSC *Gladiator*

John Mathieson, BSC was thrust into the limelight with *Gladiator*, a Roman epic film that marked a number of firsts for the British cinematographer. The tale of a general who becomes a slave and then a hero was Mathieson's first big-

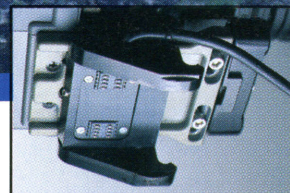
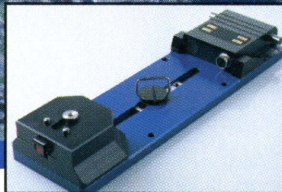
budget Hollywood studio feature, and he was rewarded for his heroic efforts with his first ASC and Academy Award nominations and his first BAFTA Film Award.

A veteran of commercials and music videos, Mathieson has photographed several critically acclaimed features, including *Pigalle* and *Bye Bye* (for which he was

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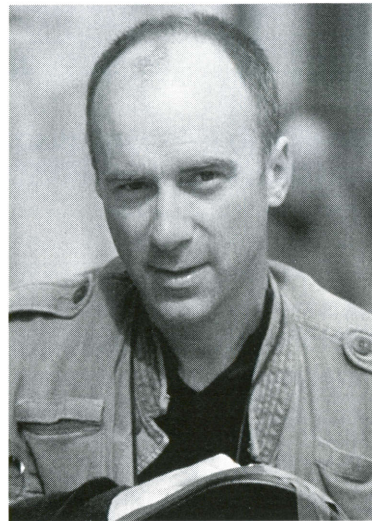
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Cinematographer John Mathieson, BSC earned his first ASC and Academy Award nominations for the period epic *Gladiator*.



awarded France's Legion D'Or and given chevalier status), as well as two films directed by John Maybury, *Remembrance of Things Past: True Stories* *Visual Lies* and *Love Is the Devil* (AC Sept. '98). However, it was his camerawork on Jake Scott's *Plunkett & Macleane* that caught the

eye of the young director's father, Ridley Scott, who recruited Mathieson for *Gladiator*. (Mathieson subsequently reteamed with the elder Scott on *Hannibal*; see AC Feb. '01.)

Rather than easing into *Gladiator*'s lengthy, arduous shooting schedule, Mathieson and Scott

charged headlong into the film's massive battlefield clash between the Romans and the Barbarians, shot in an English forest in the middle of a harsh winter. Mathieson and his extensive camera crew armed themselves with Panavision Platinums and GIIIs, Arri IIIs and a lightweight

Photos by Jaap Buitendijk, courtesy of DreamWorks LLC and Universal Pictures.

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Aaton XTR to capture the footage in Super 35. When the winter daylight waned, Mathieson shot at slower frame rates to gain extra stops, and then had that footage stretched back out to 24 fps during printing.

For the bloody spectacles in the Colosseum, Mathieson and Scott wanted a theatrical balance of light and shadow to play on the crowd. Since the duo felt that computer shadows added in post would look too contrived, Mathieson had a giant practical velarium constructed over the Colosseum set. The canvas material cast natural shadows on the crowd while allowing ribbon-like strips of sunlight to slice through. The practical velarium was then removed in post, and the computer-generated Colosseum extension and velarium were added.

For full coverage of *Gladiator*, see AC May '00.

— Douglas Bankston



John Seale, ASC, ACS
The Perfect Storm

An avid boater, cinematographer John Seale, ASC, ACS jumped at the chance to film an adaptation of Sebastian Junger's book *The Perfect Storm*, which chronicled an ill-fated commercial-fishing expedition off

the East Coast during the legendary nor'easter of 1992. Seale earned his fourth ASC Award nomination for his work. The cameraman won both the Academy Award and the ASC Award in 1996 for *The English Patient*, and he earned nominations for both awards for *Rain Man* (1988) and *Witness* (1985). His feature cred-

Sailboat passengers endure "nature's wrath" in a soundstage water tank during filming of *The Perfect Storm*.



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Images for the Ages



Cinematographer John Seale, ASC, ACS earned his fourth ASC Award nomination for his work on *The Perfect Storm*.

its include *The Talented Mr. Ripley* and *Gorillas in the Mist*, as well as the recently completed *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*.

Filed largely on Warner Bros. soundstages, *The Perfect Storm* required both elaborate visual effects and considerable innovation on the cinematographer's part. A soft-bag system that utilized pressurized air was designed by HydroFlex for each of the production's cameras; the device enabled Seale and his crew to literally submerge their cameras without sustaining water damage while working in a 100'-long water tank on a studio soundstage. A replica of the doomed 72' trawler *Andrea Gail* was mounted on a custom-designed, six-ram super gimbal that was able to simulate the pitch and roll of an oceangoing vessel. Through savvy use of Libra tri-axial remote camera heads mounted on the ends of Super Technocranes, Seale was able to suggest that the boat was trying to ride out 100' waves.

The production also employed some "low-tech" techniques, such as placing massive painted backdrops depicting different weather conditions on a traveler system behind the gimballed boat.

For full coverage of *The Perfect Storm*, see AC July '00.

— Jay Holben ■

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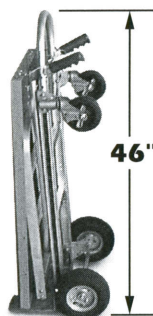
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Short Takes

Coloring Outkast's World

by Stephanie Argy



The video for Outkast's song "Bombs Over Baghdad" utilizes extensive postproduction colorization, a choice inspired by both the band's love of psychedelic colors and cinematographer Karsten Gopinath and director Dave Meyers' desire to experiment.

The video for Outkast's "B.O.B. (Bombs Over Baghdad)" gave director Dave Meyers and cinematographer Karsten "Crash" Gopinath the chance to experiment with some extreme colorization effects, a technique that the duo had been discussing for awhile. "Outkast likes a lot of psychedelic colors, [so] we decided this was the perfect video on which to try it," Gopinath says.

When he and Meyers first met the rap duo, the performers showed them a book of very colorful fractals. The fractals inspired Meyers to suggest postproduction colorization, and from the start, he had ideas about what colors to use. "We knew we wanted to make the road green and the grass purple," Gopinath reports.

Meyers and Gopinath had worked together on numerous music videos.

"We work really fast, because I know what he wants," the cinematographer attests. "We're a good team when it comes to doing a lot with a little bit of time."

For "B.O.B.," they had three days to prep and another three to shoot. "I was given a treatment, but treatments usually don't have anything to do with the way a video's going to turn out," Gopinath says, adding that Meyers sees the whole video in his head, but is also very quick to come up with solutions to problems. For example, one segment of the video featured a car with hydraulics. "We asked the guy, 'Can you jump the car?' As soon as he jumped the car, the wheels popped off," Gopinath recalls. A mechanic was called in, but Meyers and Gopinath had to scramble to think of something else they could shoot.

They couldn't afford to waste time because the schedule was so tight. "Dave likes to push the envelope as far as what we can do in a certain amount of time," Gopinath observes. With so little time for prep on "B.O.B.," the stages were barely ready in time. "They were still building while we were shooting. As they were rolling down the carpet, we were laying down the dolly tracks; as they were building a wall, we were hanging lights on it!" He once started shooting in a corner of the set because that was all that was built at that time.

The relentlessly driving video features many scenes in different settings, including stage work, car stunts, and Outkast's Andre 3000 being chased through the street by hordes of people. Bearing the postproduction colorization in mind, however, Gopinath

"Most of the colors we wanted were really punchy ... [and] we had to put lights in a lot of strange places," Gopinath notes.



worked a bit differently than he would have ordinarily. "You have to think of the image more in black-and-white," he says. A dark color cannot be replaced by a lighter one, so during the shoot the cinematographer had to keep in mind what color objects would ultimately be, and illuminate them more if necessary. "Most of the colors we wanted were really punchy, so we had to light a lot of the film," he says. "We had to put lights in a lot of strange places."

Gopinath used Kodak Vision 250D 5246 for day exteriors and Vision 500T

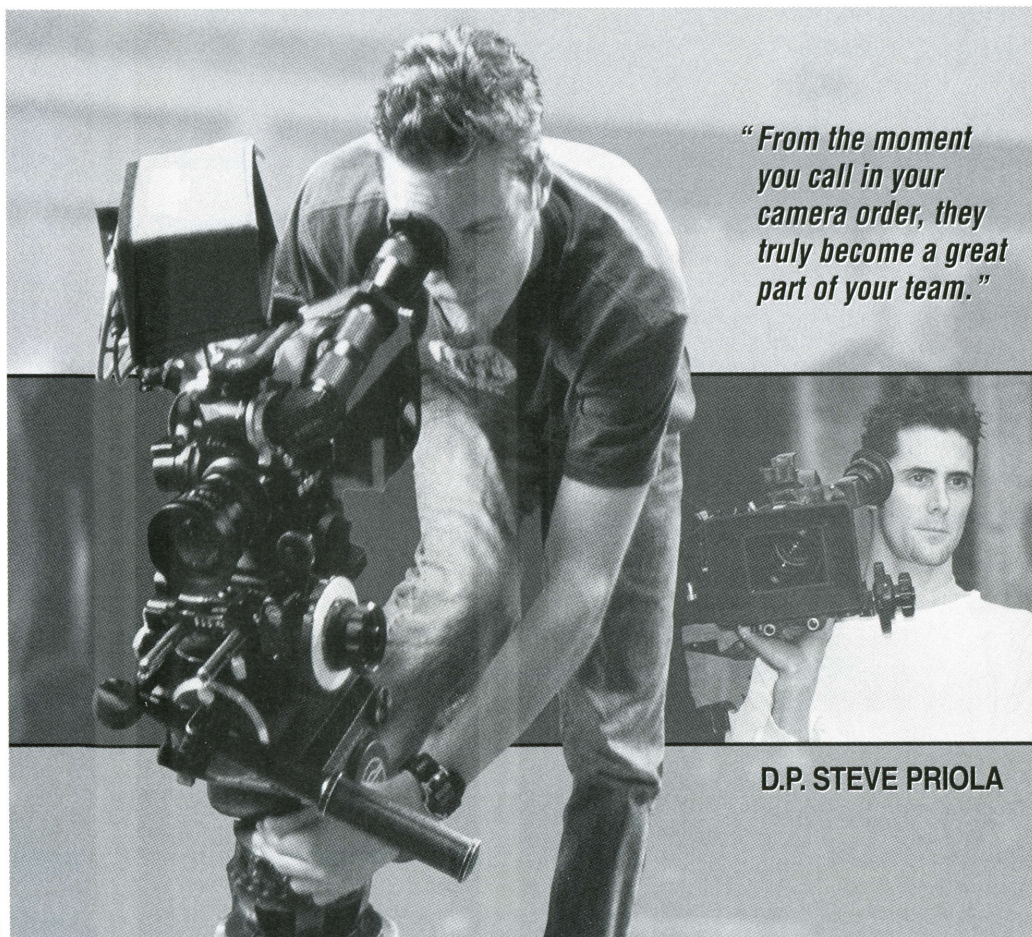
5279 for stage interiors, and he often shot with a 45-degree shutter angle, which cost him two stops. He also used the T-Rex lens, a multi-directional lens system that can pan 360 degrees and requires a lot of light. "You don't want to shoot below 11 with the T-Rex," he says. "If you shoot it wide open, it gets a little fuzzy." In this case, he lit to T22, which heightened the discomfort of shooting in the band's hometown of Atlanta at the height of summer. "They call it Hotlanta," Gopinath notes. To make matters worse, the air-conditioning on the stage went

out at one point. "We were lighting everything to a 22, and it was unbearable!"

Gopinath is used to working with a lot of light and heat, though, because highly overexposing subjects has become one of his most popular techniques. On a Black Eyed Peas video, for example, he used 24-light Dino fixtures and replaced the 1000-watt Very Narrow Spots with 1200-watt Firestarter bulbs so that he could light the talent two stops brighter than the desert sun. "We could only do 30-second takes, because it would get too hot, and their hair would start to smoke," he recalls.

On "B.O.B.," he once again used Dinos, this time with Lee Medium Blue-Green gels, which took 2 1/2 stops off the light. "I usually use Lee gels because they're tougher when it comes to heat," he says. He rarely employed gels outside, because he knew the images would be colorized during post and he wanted them to be clean.

Gopinath believes his good sense



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of lighting is a result of his background as a grip and gaffer. "I started gripping when I was 19," he says. "You learn a lot more about light by gripping than you do by being an electrician." Electricians, he points out, place a light and power it up, but the grips have to cut that light if necessary. As a result, grips "think a lot about light placement." After gripping for a number of years, he began gaffing, then studied cinematography at the American Film Institute. "I didn't learn anything technical at AFI, but I learned a lot about storytelling."

For "B.O.B.," Gopinath brought in lighting gear from Paskal in Miami, his usual source when he works in Atlanta. His camera, which he had shipped from Los Angeles, was an Arriflex 435. "It's a really sturdy camera, you can run it at 150 frames, and it's really fast to reload," he says, adding that it's also easy to change the camera's shutter angle, which is especially important to him.

He mainly used wide or long lenses on the Outkast video. "I generally



The video features car stunts as well as stage work, and Gopinath shot it in three days after three days of prep.

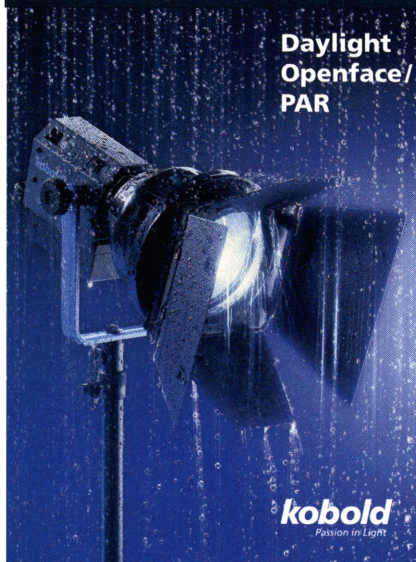
use the Ultra Primes, because they're really sharp and fast," Gopinath offers. For day exteriors, he went with a Schneider True-Pol filter, which he says has twice the power of a normal polarizing filter. "Depending on the angle of the sun, you can knock down the sky twice as much. It especially comes in handy when you're shooting cars."

The True-Pol helped to turn the sky a brilliant blue, which was especially useful for "B.O.B." because the colorization process required overly saturated colors to produce the hues that Gopinath

and Meyers wanted. "You have to really saturate the colors, even if you're going to change them," the cinematographer notes.

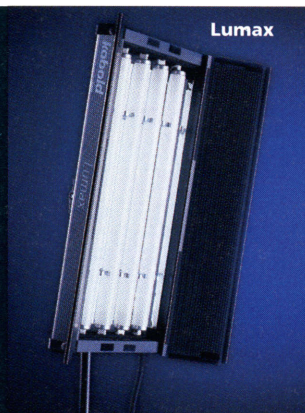
Jais Thierry Lamaire, colorist and owner of Bobine Video in Santa Monica, did part of the color manipulation. Lamaire did the telecine on a Philips Spirit HD and used a da Vinci 2K Color-Enhancement System to alter the hues in the images. "Using what da Vinci calls kilovectors, we were able to separate all of the additive colors — red, green and blue — and all of the subtractive colors

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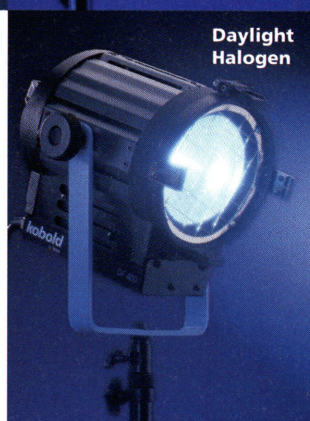
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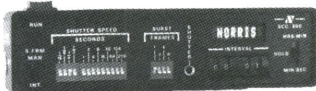
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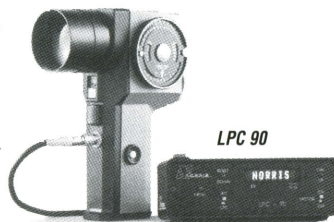
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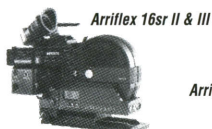
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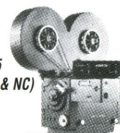
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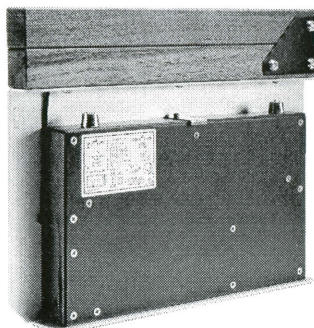


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— yellow, magenta and cyan,” Lamaire explains. “The challenge with these kinds of techniques is to separate the colors that are very close to each other. That’s why, with one kilovector, we first grabbed the hue of the color, then the luminance of the color, and then the saturation of the color. Once we had isolated the color, we replaced it with a different color, keeping the luminance of the original one for a more natural look.” He says that the process is similar to the Replace Color function in Adobe Photoshop, but much more sophisticated.

In some of the shots, however, the skin tones were too close to the color being changed, or items didn’t have enough color in them to be switched in telecine. Those shots were done instead by Cerulean Digital Color and Animation, a company that also colorizes older footage, such as vintage TV series or archival material. According to Tracy Pearce, the company’s director of production, Cerulean does its colorization using a proprietary software that allows animators to draw self-matting polygons on the footage frame by frame. Each polygon applies a transparent color according to the luminance value of the image, and also blocks out the colors applied below it. For this reason, the polygons are applied in layers, from the back of the image to the front.

In one scene in “B.O.B.,” Andre 3000 runs along a street, chased by a crowd of kids. Cerulean colored the street green, then had to matte each person running along, using polygons that moved along with him or her from shot to shot so that the green layer below wouldn’t show through. “We had to animate that, even though they were their original color,” says Pearce. The work on those shots was done by animators in Patna, India, who work for Cerulean’s parent company, Dynacs Inc.

The challenge with “B.O.B.,” as with many music videos, was to shoot the project in the short time allotted, yet still attempt something innovative. Gopinath says a cinematographer needs to develop a balance: “You have to think technically *and* artistically.” ■

New Products & Services

compiled by Douglas Bankston

Arri Unveils Its New ST and LT Cameras

AC analyzes the user-friendly attributes of the Arricam System.

To anyone not associated with the motion-picture industry, the building in Munich's Schwabing district looks like any other three-story European structure. To those who make their livings behind or in front of a motion-picture camera, however, the blue logo over the entrance is instantly recognizable: ARRI.

Occupying a small city block in Munich, Arri headquarters has been in the same location since the company was founded in 1917 by August Arnold and Robert Richter. Close by are Arri's large, automated machining facilities at Theresienstrasse. On the outskirts of town, about 40 miles to the south, Stephanskirchen is home to Arri's lighting division.

A privately held concern, Arri has wholly owned subsidiaries in every major filmmaking center, and agents around the globe. Through this network of subsidiaries and agents, Arri provides cameras, lighting and digital-imaging systems in quantities unrivaled in the industry. The small two-man operation of 1917 has grown into the largest manufacturer of motion-picture equipment in the world.

A short flight away from the Munich headquarters is Arri's Vienna-based design division, where chief engineer Walter Trauninger supervises his staff in the completion of Arri's latest project, the Arricam System. Utilizing the design concept of Moviecam founder Gabriel Bauer, Trauninger's team is busy putting the finishing touches on two new 35mm sync-sound cameras: the Arricam ST and LT.

The roots of the Arricam project can be traced back to the early 1990s, when Arri acquired a controlling interest in Moviecam, and with it the services of its founder, Bauer. Capitalizing on design principles introduced in 1989 with Arri's 765 65mm camera system and perfected with the 535 and 435 series of 35mm cameras, the Arricam is a marriage of the two firms' designs. The Arricams offer filmmakers intelligent, modular cameras that complement each other in design and purpose.

AC was recently invited to Munich to see the Arricams firsthand. The Türkenstrasse complex houses the main assembly facility for Arriflex cameras, Arrilasers and LocPro location projectors, as well as Arri's administrative, sales and service offices. Within the triangular grouping of buildings are two soundstages, a complete film laboratory, a state-of-the-art post-production facility, and research and engineering departments.

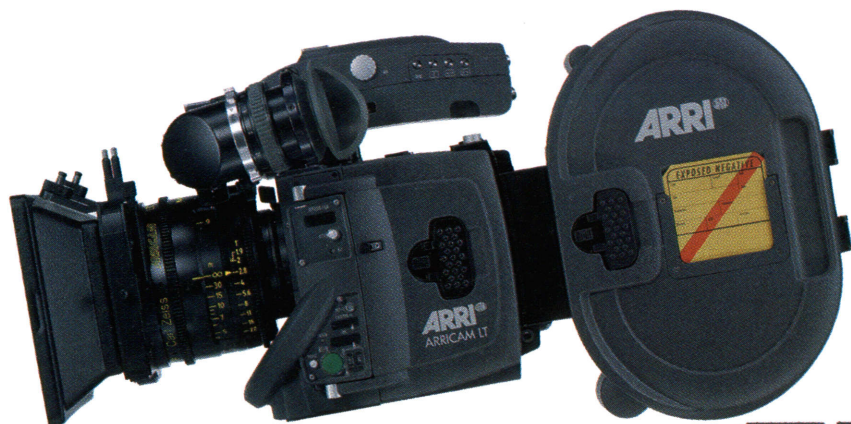
A full-scale rental department occupies a good portion of one building. This one-stop shop for film producers provides everything from grip trucks to helicopters and most everything in between. The facility even boasts a 360-seat screening room that is open to the public as a local theater in the evening.

As Trauninger explains, Arri's design philosophy is simple: technical innovation must result in increased production value for the end user. "With the Arricam System," he says, "we went back to the drawing board. Gabriel Bauer, a working cameraman himself, engaged in a vigorous exchange of ideas with many working professionals in the industry, and came up with the concept for the Arricam System."

Trauninger illustrated his points with a large chart that mapped the system's components. "To ensure that every production can customize the package as needed, the system is highly modular," he says. "Nearly all major components are interchangeable. You can use the ST Finder on the LT camera; you can use the In-camera Slate Box on either camera, and so on. If a production needs sophisticated effects, they can rent all the modules they need. A smaller production can simply rent a camera body with a viewfinder."

The Arricam System draws upon technologies introduced with the 535, which offered a bi-directional data-transfer capacity that made the camera truly programmable. The 535's electronically adjustable and programmable mirror shutter, linked to the camera's speed,





made speed/shutter ramps simple and repeatable. This concept was advanced further with Arri's 435 MOS camera, which accomplishes the same task at speeds of up to 150 fps. The Arricam System now makes it possible to accomplish speed/shutter ramps, speed/iris ramps or shutter/iris ramps (or depth of field ramps), controlled either from the camera itself or from a wireless remote controller.

One of the core concepts for this new system and its features can be found in Arri's commitment to the digital-intermediate process for film production. Film, the company believes, will continue to dominate worldwide for origination and exhibition, and digital processes will continue to expand significantly in the post environment. The data stream of camera and lens information from the Arricams, combined with a high-quality video output, begins the transition from the analog to the digital world. This data is generated by the Lens Data System, and the In-camera Slate is utilized in digital effects and postproduction. The process is completed when digital information is recorded back to film by an Arrilaser.

Trauninger and members of his engineering team set up two cameras on tripods in a meeting room at Arri and laid accessories close by on a large table. Viewfinders, magazines, speed controls and video components were switched from camera to camera, accompanied by the hum of a small, battery-powered screwdriver.



Cameras and Viewfinders

Both cameras share many features, including the 11.2- to 180-degree electronically controlled mirror shutter and the 54mm PL lens mount, which can be easily re-centered for Super 35. Like all current Arri cameras, they are 24-volt systems. Both cameras utilize the patented Arri five-link compensating movement, which requires no infield lubrication, and both movements are available in either 3- or 4-perf versions. Dry specs aside, the Arricams also offer a sleek, inviting design.

The Arricam ST (Studio) is a full-blown studio camera that runs from 1-60 fps and is extremely quiet — less than 20 dB/A. The 400' and 1000' ST carbon-fiber magazines run forward and reverse and can mount in the back or top position.

The camera is matched with the ST Finder system. As Trauninger notes, "A camera operator spends all day looking through the viewfinder, so we took special care to make a bright viewfinder with exceptional image quality. The eyepiece can be rotated 360 degrees, [and can accommodate] camera left and right viewing, automatic or manual upright image orientation, flip-in ND

filter and so on. We have all the accessories you could ever want." He demonstrated each one: a short and a long eyepiece extension, an eyepiece extension with a flip-in anamorphic desqueezer, two types of Frameglows, an extra camera information display, the ST Integrated Video System, the 100 percent Video Top, heated eyecups and a Steadicam low-mode bracket.

"In addition, there are some special features," he continues. "The ST Finder can accept a ground glass in two possible positions. Normally, the ground glass will be found in the first viewing plane to be seen by the video tap, as well as through the eyepiece. However, it is also possible to relocate the ground glass to the second imaging plane. In this case, you cannot see the image in the viewfinder, but you get a much better image on the video assist!"

The Arricam LT (Lite), on the other hand, is designed for handheld and Steadicam use. The lightweight LT sounds in at less than 24 dB/A and has a speed range of 1-40 fps, a surprisingly small price to pay for such a small and lightweight camera. The LT shares all of the other features of its big brother, including an electronic mirror shutter and the fact that almost all accessories can be exchanged between the cameras.

There are two special 400' magazines for this camera. The 400' LT Steadicam magazine has the feed and take-up spindles on top of each other to avoid a weight shift, and the 400' LT Shoulder magazine is moved a little farther away from the camera and at a slight angle to better balance the camera when handheld. Both are made from lightweight carbon fiber and employ what Arri calls an "active-displacement" technology. Opening an LT magazine, Trauninger details, "As the take-up side gets bigger, the film pushes the take-up spindle toward the feed spindle, which

does not need as much space anymore since it has less film now." He pushes on the film core, and both spindles shift in the magazine. "This allowed us to make the LT magazines much smaller, which again is great for handheld and Steadicam work."

The LT is complemented by the lightweight LT Finder system, which includes a top-mounted IVS video assist designed to ensure perfect balance, and other lighter accessories such as a long eyepiece extension, two Frameglows, a heated eyepiece, a 100-percent Video Top and a Steadicam low-mode bracket.

Then Trauninger pulls the ST Finder off the ST camera body and attaches it to the LT camera. "Both finder systems fit on both cameras," he says with a smile. "Accessory interchangeability was one of our great priorities. Although the ST is designated the studio camera, it adapts well to shoulder operation, and the LT performs equally well with a full complement of studio accessories on an ArriHead." He then pulls yet another viewfinder from the table. "This is a third viewfinder system that has been specifically designed for anamorphic shows. By having a separate finder for anamorphic, we avoid many of the compromises that plague systems that can switch between spherical and anamorphic. The results are better image quality and a happier camera operator."

Movement/Shutter Drive

Michael Koppetz, a research and design engineer at Arri, explains the separate movement and shutter drive motors for the Arricams: "There is no mechanical connection between the two motors. The advantage is that we've eliminated the need for a complicated transmission to 'get around the corner' from the mirror to the motor. The drive shaft for the movement and magazine and the drive shaft for the mirror are separated by a 90-degree bend.

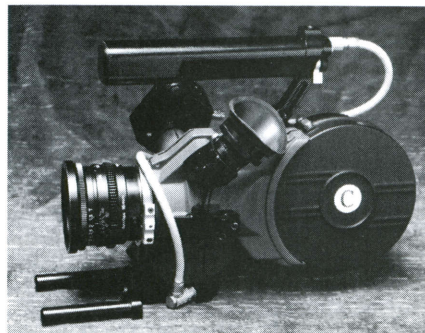
"To transfer drive power from one area to the next requires a complicated transmission, and therefore a larger motor to provide enough power to control the movement, transmission and shutter. By separating them, we elimi-

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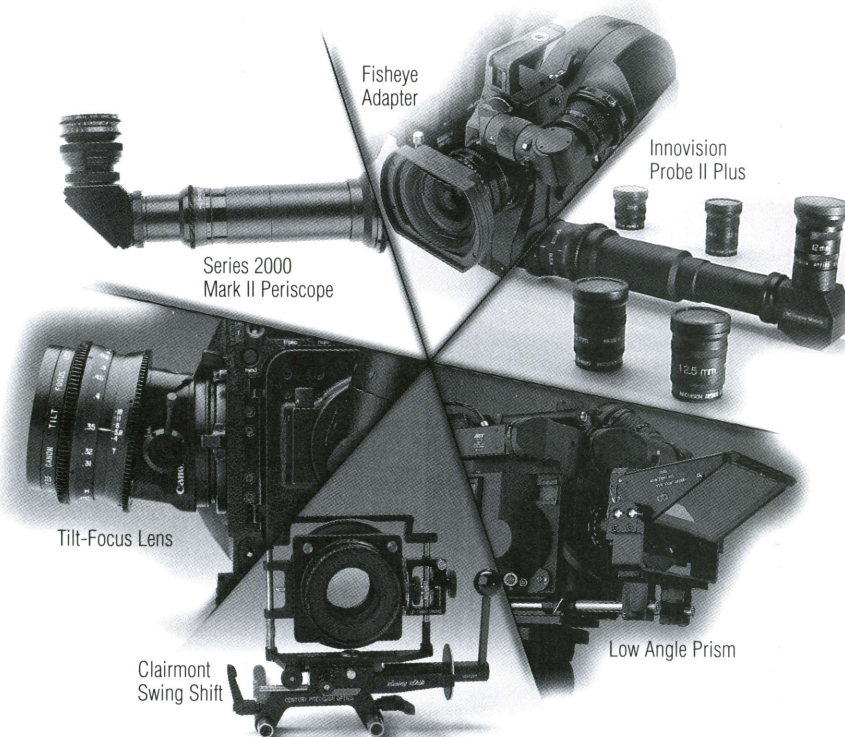
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TECHNICAL DATA			
	ST	LT	NOTES
Lens Mount	54mm PL		adjustable for Super35
Flange focal distance	51.98 – 0.01		
LDS lens contacts	Yes		
Forward run	1-60 fps	1-40 fps	
Reverse run	1-32 fps		with ST magazines
Noise level	below 20 dB/A	below 24 dB/A	
Temperature range	14° to 104° F -10° to +40° C		
Mirror reflex shutter	11.2° to 180°		electronically adjustable while camera is running
Power supply	24V DC to 32V DC		
Weight of body	8.25 kg 18.19 lbs	5.25 kg 11.57 lbs	
Magazine weights	1000 ft/300m ST magazine = 5.2 kg / 11.46 lbs 400 ft/120m ST magazine = 3.5 kg / 7.72 lbs 400 ft/ 120m LT Shoulder magazine = 2.4 kg/ 5.73 lbs 400 ft/120m LT Steadicam magazine = 2.5 kg / 5.51 lbs		

nate that transmission and greatly reduce the load on each of the motors. With two motors as opposed to one, we can actually save space and make a quieter system. Additionally, the two motors behave in an entirely different manner; shutter rotation is a very smooth, continuous operation, whereas advancing the movement is very jerky and stuttered. By providing two separate drive motors, we designed a more efficient motor system for each of these jobs.

"We have a triple fail-safe system to make sure that no sync problems ever occur," Koppetz adds, "but realistically, it's not much of an issue with today's technology."

Arricam Accessories

As Trauninger snaps boxes and modules on and off the camera bodies, Günter Zöh, the product manager for the camera division, explains, "From many conversations with our customers, we found that they have three main requirements for accessories. First, they want a complete set of accessories, including

LCD video monitors, Steadicam brackets, and so on. Second, they want the accessories to be interchangeable to a high degree, and third, they want them to be modular, so they can build a-la-carte camera systems for the varied needs of today's production environment. We made these three points the guiding principles for our accessories development."

Camera Control

If none of the accessories is attached to the camera, a control panel on the camera left side allows viewing and setting of camera speed and shutter angle. In addition, it includes a "run" and a "phase" button and an LED that glows when a filter is inserted into the gate.

If capabilities beyond the basics are asked for, the Speed Control Box (SCB) can be snapped onto the camera's right side. It can be used to create ramps, and has an integrated speed-sync function that allows the Arricams to sync to a video or computer monitor, a rear projector, or any other external device. "Having the sync functions integrated is great,"

offers Zöh. "Many productions do not rent an extra accessory for syncing to a monitor, but end up using monitors on the set anyway. Then our rental house usually must rush something to them. This can be trying when they are shooting in difficult-to-reach locations."

A small box with a knob, the Manual Control Box on its own can set fps or shutter. If used with the Speed Control Box, the assistant can control speed/exposure ramps or depth-of-field (shutter/iris) ramps manually, with the turn of a dial.

"We have made great steps in integration", says Trauninger, popping another box onto the camera. "This is the Lens Data Box, which has all the electronics for the Lens Data System, plus all the electronics for our wired and Wireless Lens Control System." He pointed at a stubby antenna sticking out of the Lens Data Box. "I can now use the Wireless Remote Control, which is already being used with the 435 in the field, to control the Arricam."

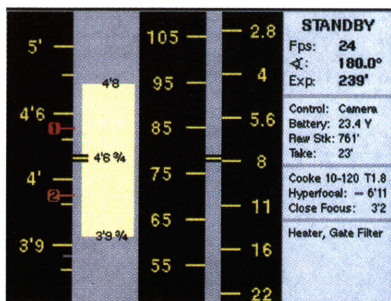
The Lens Data System

Probably the most imaginative new component of the Arricam System is the Lens Data System. Trauninger proudly showed off an array of futuristic-looking lenses. "We take Ultra Primes, Variable Primes, Cooke S-4s and Cooke zooms and outfit them with internal, contact-free encoders and a new housing. The glass is the same, but these are smart lenses now."

He points out four spring-loaded contacts on the lens' PL mount that match similar contacts on the camera's lens mount. Then he attaches the lens to the ST camera, and a display on top of



the camera suddenly comes to life. A closer look at the display reveals a graphic mimicked the three lens rings. When one turns the focus ring, the focusing graphic on the display also changes. "The lens reports the position of its rings to the camera, which can use this information in a variety of ways," Trauninger says. "This display, for instance, we call the Lens Data Display.



"The graphic exactly duplicates the movement of the lens rings," he points out. "For any kind of remote shooting situation, this is a lifesaver, far superior to the dim b/w witness cameras."

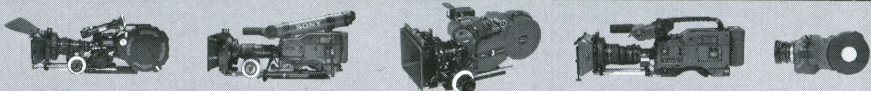
A yellow bar next to the focus ring also expands and contracts as one turns the iris ring.

"That bar shows depth of field," Trauninger explains. "It updates automatically as you change the lens rings. This is one of the features that were not possible before the LDS. Others include a mark at the hyperfocal distance, plus various lens and camera status information [see picture]. Camera assistants have already shown a great interest in this, as it makes their life a lot easier. The depth-of-field graphic alone is so much faster and easier to read than other calculators."

Ultrasonic Tape Measure

Trauninger holds up a device the size of a light meter a couple of feet in front of the camera, and pushed a button. Immediately a focus mark appears on the Lens Data Display (LDD). The device is the Ultrasonic Tape Measure, or UTM. It uses ultrasonic sound waves to measure the distance to the Ultrasonic Tape Receiver, which is mounted on the camera. It can then either store the measurement, or transmit it to the LDD, where it appears as one of nine color-

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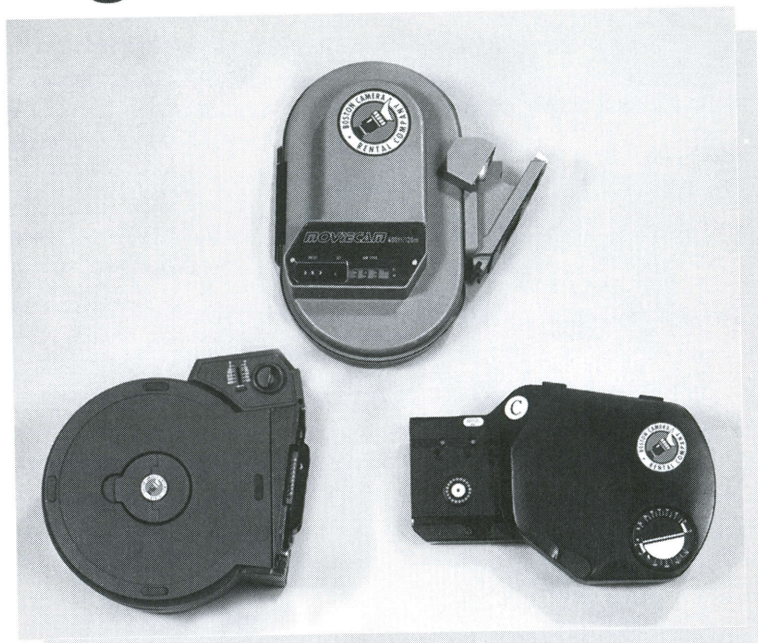
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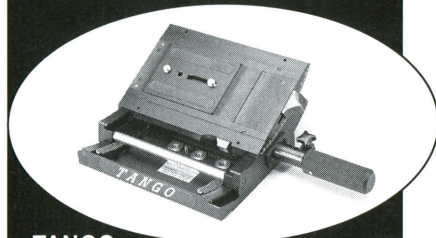
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coded and numbered focus marks.

The UTM eliminates the need for stretching a tape measure across the set, sometimes an impossible task, and greatly simplifies focus marks in a remote crane situation. "Many people have talked about auto-focus systems, but we believe that in most cases an auto-focus system would be inappropriate for motion-picture filmmaking," he elaborates. "Because focus is as much a technical challenge as it is an artistic choice, it has to be controlled by a human. So instead we looked at the current ways assistants deal with focus. Then we asked ourselves: what tools can we build to make their job easier?"

He walks across the room, clicking the UTM in three different locations. "With the UTM, you can quickly walk onto the set, hold the UTM at the points that need to be in focus, and set your marks." As he says these words, three more focus marks appeared on the LDD.

Video Assist

Trauninger continues, "This is the first time that a motion-picture film camera allows all status information to be automatically communicated throughout the whole system in real time. Camera speed, shutter angle, footage, lens information — all of these are available to all accessories, and we are just starting to scratch the surface of how this can improve the production workflow. Here, for instance, is one outlet." He points to a video-assist monitor mounted on the camera. "The Arricam video assist is a development based on the Integrated Video System (IVS). It has a built-in character generator that can show all this information on the screen, which is great for remote shooting and Steadicam. As long as the assistants have a video feed from the camera, they know exactly what's going on."

The Arricam IVS uses a high-speed, high-resolution 1/2" video camera with an f1.2 aperture to give an extremely bright and high-quality image even under low-light conditions. Arri engineers worked from the concept that video-assist images are often the first line in the editing process, and they

wanted to provide a quality sufficient for temporary postproduction work. The IVS character generator can insert format markings, camera status, timecode, LDS information and any text the user wants to enter. Because directors are probably not going to appreciate this flood of information as much as camera assistants, the video assist has duplicates of all outputs — one with the data inserted, and one without.

In addition, Arri has incorporated an exposure time adjustment to the tap that can emulate the film's motion-blur characteristics at a given speed and exposure, and all functions of the IVS can be accessed via remote control.

In-Camera Slate

Another optional accessory for the ST and LT cameras is the In-Camera Slate System. At the beginning of each take, the camera exposes slate information such as production name, director, cinematographer, camera roll, scene number, take number and date, together with timecode as man-readable text within the film frame via a pixel LED array.

The In-Camera Slate eliminates the problems associated with poorly illuminated and out-of-focus traditional slates. It ensures clean, clear slates in any shooting configuration without having to adjust picture composition to capture the slate at the beginning of a take — potentially saving a great deal of time and wasted footage on the set.

In post, the In-Camera Slate information can be extracted using Arri Optical Character Recognition software. Since the information is actually in the image area of the film, it can be extracted in telecine, or later on in an Avid system.

"We believe in the future of film," Trauninger asserts. "[In designing the Arricam,] we wanted to create a versatile system for many forms of film production — a small, lightweight camera for hand-held, crane or Steadicam operation and a production camera with full capabilities — so we built both of them."

For more information, contact your nearest Arriflex subsidiary or agency, or visit www.arri.com.



New Facility for Visual Products

Visual Products, Inc., a leader in the used motion-picture equipment market, has a new location and showroom only 30 minutes from the Cleveland International Airport in Wellington, Ohio. The newly constructed 15,000-square-foot facility houses an extensive selection of used film equipment including cameras, lenses, support, dollies, jibs, cranes, lighting, grip, and editing and sound equipment. These goods are on display in a 3,000 square-foot, two-level showroom.

In addition to the expansive showroom, the new facility contains state-of-the-art optical and mechanical departments and a machine shop. A full-time staff services and overhauls every piece of equipment to meet the strictest standards. A six-month warranty on all equipment backs up the staff's confidence in their work. Visual Products also manufactures several precision upgrades for cameras such as a IIC videotap, BLII isolation, PL mounts, and more. The company is a new products dealer for Chroziel, Formatt Filters, TCS and others.

Visual Products was founded in 1989 by president Jim Budzilek. Over the course of 12 years, the company has grown to a staff of 10 full-time employees who see to every customer's needs. Says sales manager Mike Casey, "Quality is critical to everyone who purchases equipment from us. Our new facility allows our customers to visit, try out and purchase with confidence."

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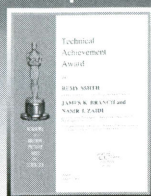
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Arrilite 1000 Recall

Arnold & Richter has issued an important safety announcement regarding the Arrilite 1000 stating that the instrument is a potential fire hazard. Under certain circumstances, the plastic housing on some Arrilite 1000 lights can catch fire. Arrilites manufactured between 1998 and 2000 used a housing material that can, if it comes in contact with the hot quartz lamp, ignite and support a flame. Although these circumstances are rare, the danger is real and could lead to serious personal injury if not corrected.

To reduce the risk of fire, Arnold & Richter is recalling all Arrilite 1000 fixtures that have serial numbers ranging from 10502 to 13998. Immediately check all Arrilite 1000 lights in your possession to see if any of your lights fall into this range. (The serial number on an Arrilite 1000 is located on the rear of the housing.) If any lights are within this range, you must return them to Arri as soon as possible. Arri will promptly repair or replace the affected light.

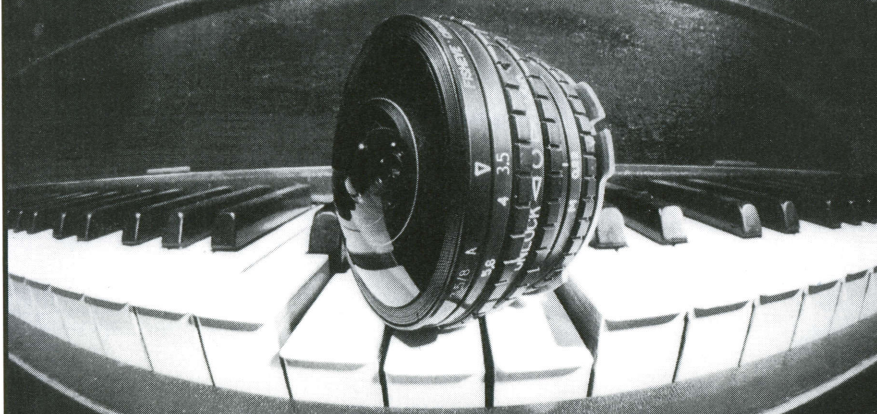
Please note that Arrilite 1000 lights are contained in the following Lighting Kits: 120V Kits - 571925, 571951, 571984, 571989, 571991, 571996 220V Kits - 571825, 571851, 571884, 571889, 571891, 571896.

For returns, contact Arri, Inc. customer service at (800) 627-2774. A return authorization number will be issued along with the shipping address and instructions. Please have the serial numbers available when you call.

Return only the Arrilite 1000. Please do not return accessories or lamps. Be certain that the return authorization number and your return address are included inside the package.

Arri will immediately answer any questions about this recall. Direct inquiries to Richard Stenken at (800) 627-2774. ■

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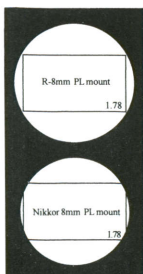
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Points East

The Guggenheim Showcases Italian Cinematographers

by Eric Rudolph



Vittorio Storaro, ASC, AIC came to Manhattan in April and spoke to an overflow crowd about his cinematography for masterworks like *The Conformist* and *Apocalypse Now* as reporters scribbled, flashguns popped and news cameras whirled. Following his talk, he showed a key reel of *Apocalypse Now* that had been newly timed and brilliantly printed using Technicolor's revived imbibition dye-transfer process. As the film rolled, much of the crowd moved toward the screen, finding seats on the floor for a closer vantage point.

The talk didn't take place at one of the many film schools that dot the upper and lower fringes of Manhattan, however. The crowd had convened at the Guggenheim Museum for the opening of the screening series *Conversations Between Shadows and Light: Italian Cinematography*, which will continue through July 28. Films

scheduled to be screened include *Death in Venice*, *Titus*, *The Insider*, *The Leopard*, *8 1/2*, *Once Upon A Time in America*, *Radio Days* and *The Flowers of St. Francis*; cinematographers represented in the series include Dante Spinotti, ASC, AIC; Luciano Tovoli, ASC, AIC; Carlo Di Palma; Aldo Graziati; Otello Martelli; Aldo Tonti; Tonini Delli Colli; and Luca Bigazzi. (For a complete schedule, visit www.guggenheim.org.)

During his appearance at the Guggenheim, the serious and soft-spoken Storaro explained why he feels Italian cinematographers might be deemed worthy of the attention of one of the world's great museums. "Why does one culture, one nation, sometimes do its best work in one area?" Storaro posited. "There is no doubt that today we are the representation of everything that came before us. In my childhood, I was surrounded by Renaissance paintings everywhere — in my schoolbooks, and

when I went to church with my mother every Sunday morning. Walking on the street you would pass 14th-, 15th- and 16th-century buildings. The equilibrium of the basic structure of every building tells you something. Everywhere you go, even on vacation, even if you don't want to be, you are surrounded by those images. When you become more conscious, when you go to photography or cinematography school, you go deeper, studying what you saw since the beginning. So there is no doubt that all of those elements, that kind of Italian vision, surrounded our normal lives and was in our bones."

Storaro explained that the intimate psychological journey of the characters in *Apocalypse Now* provoked a similar personal journey of discovery for himself. "I stopped filming for a year [after finishing the film] and went back to my books like a student," he said. "I was trying to understand light. I jumped into

Captain Willard (Martin Sheen) confronts his dark side in *Apocalypse Now*, which is being readied for theatrical re-release.

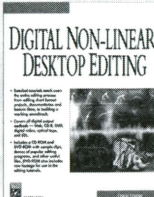
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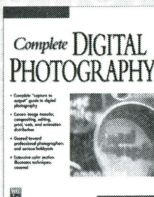
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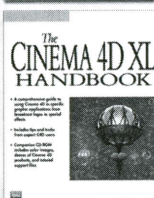
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the face of light, where I discovered a wonderful, beautiful world, the world of colors. They are the children of light and shadow, and like our children, they have their own names: red, green, blue. Each has its own wavelength, personality, meaning and a specific emotion. Our entire bodies receive this energy, and we respond like film does; we're very sensitive to light and color. Our metabolism, blood pressure and emotions change [with exposure to certain colors]."

The reel of dye-transfer-printed *Apocalypse Now* to which Storaro treated the Guggenheim audience illustrated this point while serving as a blazing tribute to his art. The bold colors were strong and saturated, and the shadow details subtle; the footage looked as if it had been filmed yesterday.

The reel was available because an expanded version of Francis Ford Coppola's Vietnam War epic, which has been restored using the proprietary Technicolor process by Storaro and original editor Walter Murch under the director's supervision, is scheduled for theatrical release later this year. At press time, the film was scheduled to premiere at the Cannes Film Festival. (Some 54 minutes of footage have been restored to the film.)

To Storaro, whose passion for the cinema obviously runs deep, the return of the dye-transfer process is one of the most important developments in motion pictures in years. "When I saw the answer print struck from the original *Apocalypse* negative onto regular release stock, I was almost crying," the cinematographer said with great sadness. "We lose about one percent of the color each year, so nearly 25 percent of the color separation was gone. I was losing the balance between the three primary colors, as well as one of the most important elements of the film's vision, the blacks. Black was the symbol of the unconscious, from where the truth emerges, and was one of the main visual elements of the [film]."

Having seen what dye-transfer printing could do for the road-show prints of *Bulworth* (see AC June '98), Storaro

asked Technicolor to do a roll test "to see what we could achieve on *Apocalypse*. I could use the original negative [which had been stored at Coppola's Zoetrope studios along with deleted scenes and outtakes] directly to make the YCM matrixes. From the matrixes, we could make the dye-transfer prints, thereby skipping the double passage of the interpositive and internegative steps. When I saw the results, I realized that because the three matrixes are able to record every single primary color, they could read more deeply into the information on the original negative. When I visited him and described the test, Francis was convinced — without seeing any results — and gave the go-ahead to re-edit the negative and print to dye transfer."

After meeting with Coppola, Storaro returned to Rome. "Dale Grahn of Technicolor Los Angeles, a great timer, shipped the new dye-transfer reels to Technicolor Rome, where I worked with Carlo La Bella, the terrific color supervisor there. We made our comments and transferred the reels back to Los Angeles. From there, Dale did a new, improved set of YCM matrixes from the original negative, from which we are producing the new print that will be shown at Cannes and, I hope, many additional prints that will be shown all around the world."

Storaro is thrilled about the commercial revival of dye-transfer printing. "That process is the greatest system, because it pulls more information out of old negatives, and because the prints don't fade. Everyone today is arguing that film is dead, and digital cinematography is what we should use. They should be aware that digital cinematography is reading one-third of the information obtained with a normal film negative. We should preserve films using dye transfer to have a reference of what a film look is about in order to give the chance for digital to rise to the level of film, rather than letting movies go down to the digital level." ■

Books in Review

by Ray Zone

Silent Cinema:

An Introduction

by Paolo Cherchi Usai

British Film Institute

Distributed by

Indiana University Press

196 pp., paperbound, \$22.95

ISBN 0-85170-746-7

In 1994, when the first English edition of this book appeared under the title *Burning Passions: An Introduction to the Study of Silent Cinema*, it became evident that Paolo Cherchi Usai is one of our most dedicated film historians and preservationists. Usai is senior curator of the Motion Picture Department at George Eastman House, director of the L. Jeffrey Selznick School of Film Preservation and an associate professor of film at the University of Rochester (N.Y.). He also co-organizes the annual Pordenone Silent Film Festival, and his passion for film history is evident in every line he writes.

To research film history without having this book at hand would be like flying an airplane without a joystick. The study of silent film is like trench warfare; the enemy — in this case, time and the resultant film deterioration — steadily encroaches on the battlefield. Usai's passionate inquiries have produced this essential field guide to a vast terra incognita that is just now beginning to be mapped.

Silent film covers a period from 1893 to 1927 and has, in Usai's words, "become more the object of archaeological study than an occasion for public entertainment," part of an "archaic tradition" that most people today can "no longer decipher." With this book, Usai attempts to "provide the tools necessary to understand this tradition, and to dispel

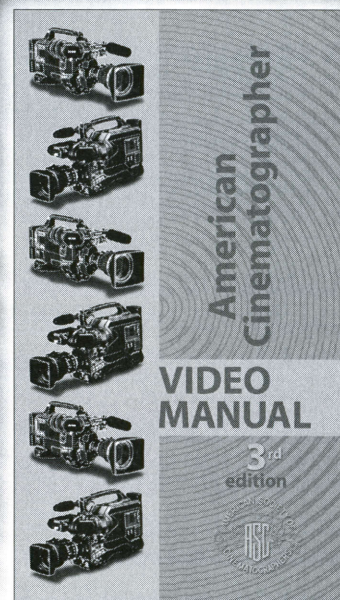
some of the prejudices surrounding it (such as its status as a dead language) through the study of visual artifacts whose primary feature is that they are fragile, and bound to be progressively altered through their repeated exposure to the viewer."

The technical information about film and production remains in the foreground in Usai's book. The first chapter, "Romance of Celluloid," is a concise examination of the physical structure, dimensions and formats of 35mm nitrate film along with considerations for projection and sound performed live in the early days of film exhibition. To underscore important points, Usai puts them in a box — e.g., "Rule 1: In the event of finding a nitrate film, do not try to project it!" (Silent films are highly flammable. The title of Usai's first edition of this book is a reference to that volatility, a sly commentary on the theatrical acting styles in early films, a pointed comment on the enthusiasm and dedication necessary for research and preservation of silent film.)

Usai's book has gorgeous illustrated color plates showing many different film frames and formats from the early days of film. Color tinting and early color processes are a particular passion of Usai's, which he nicely showcases in a chapter called "The Way of All Flesh Tones." At the end of each chapter, Usai provides comprehensive suggestions for further reading.

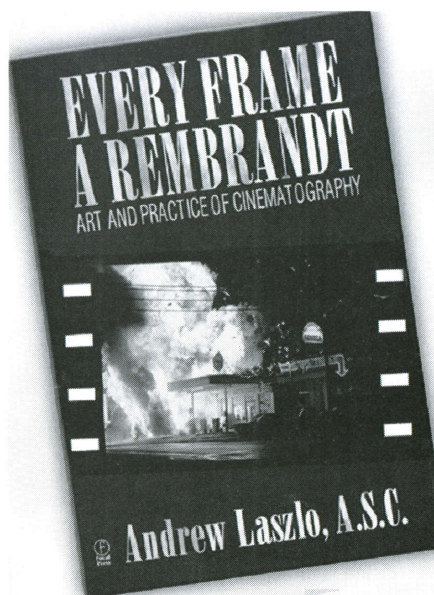
Highly useful appendices are provided on film-measurement tables, moving-image archives, edge codes and edge marks for the identification of old films made by Méliès, Eastman Kodak and Pathé Films. The book also includes instructions for the would-be film researcher on the ethics of preservation

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and how to deal with personnel at film archives. "Learning how to watch silent films means trying to identify with a lost visual culture," Usai writes. "It also means going back to the origins of a truly flammable, even explosive relationship between the image and the mind."

Screencraft: Film Music

by Mark Russell & James Young
Focal Press

192 pp., paperbound, \$39.95
ISBN 0-240-80441-4

The third volume in Focal Press's *Screencraft* series, *Film Music* is an excellent examination of the role music and film scoring plays in contemporary cinema. (A review of *Screencraft: Cinematography* was published in *AC* Jan. '00.) Included with the book is a CD with 13 examples of film music, including themes from *The Magnificent Seven*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Alien* and *Edward Scissorhands*.

This 9" x 12" book is generously illustrated with color photos and film stills, along with handwritten samples of scores composed by artists such as Bernard Herrmann, Elmer Bernstein, Jerry Goldsmith, John Barry, Lalo Schiffrin, Michael Nyman, Gabriel Yared, Howard Shore and Danny Elfman. As with other volumes in the *Screencraft* series, the subjects present their views in the form of a monologue, and their comments are juxtaposed with images from their respective films.

The late Bernard Herrmann may be the single most influential dramatic film composer of the 20th century, and he stated that "cinema is undoubtedly the most important artistic development" of the century. Cinema and television have become the greatest patrons of commissioned music of our time, and many of the composers have become recording stars. The movies were never silent — there was always a pianist pounding out themes from Rossini's "William Tell Overture" or Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique" symphony as movies screened. But when silent film turned into talking pictures, Hollywood began to hire respected composers. When Max

Steiner convinced David O. Selznick to let him compose original music for *Symphony of Six Million* (1932), the importance of dramatic music began to register. With *King Kong* (1933), Steiner shaped the classic Hollywood sound by borrowing from opera the concept of leit-motifs, which give characters their own recurring melodies embedded in rich orchestral textures.

Herrmann's collaboration with Orson Welles on *Citizen Kane* (1941) was so pronounced that Welles actually cut his film to fit the composer's music. In 1952, when Dimitri Tiomkin's song "Do Not Forsake Me, Oh, My Darling" from *High Noon* sold more than a million copies, hit songs began to drive box-office triumphs, and suddenly every major motion picture had to have a title song. Soundtrack albums are still top sellers today.

Film Music opens with a chapter on Herrmann, who is represented in remarks about his work by Mervyn Cooke, an academic. In subsequent chapters, each composer offers insights that shed light on the film in question. Elmer Bernstein broke new ground with *The Man With the Golden Arm* (1956) by opting for a jazz score. "It just seemed the appropriate thing to do," he states simply. "It was a film about a junkie who wanted to be a jazz drummer." Maurice Jarre, who won an Academy Award for *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) says, "I tried to find a beautiful, idealistic theme for this film. I think it is very important to have a main theme and to manage to make as many variations as possible instead of disturbing the audience with too many different themes which become lost."

Younger composers such as Danny Elfman acknowledge their musical influences. "Sometimes I do little gag versions of a piece of music," he says, "and lounge-ize it." For Zbigniew Preisner, who became famous for his collaborations with the late Polish director Krzysztof Kieslowski (*The Decalogue; Three Colors: Blue, White and Red*), "the most important thing in music is silence You'll hear a lot of silence in my scores." ■

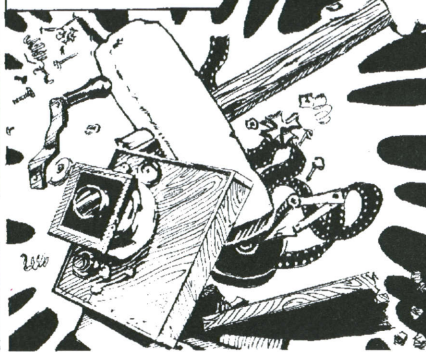
by Ray Zone & Chuck Roblin

THE WILD WEST

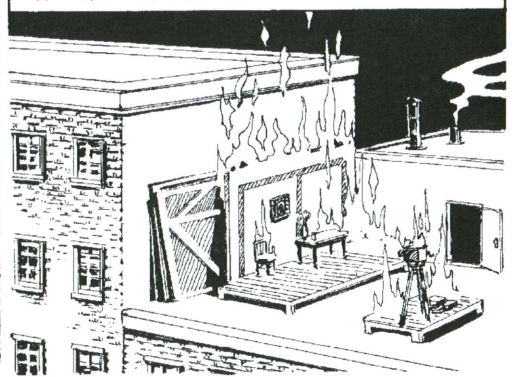
EARLY SILENT FILM DIRECTOR ALLAN DWAN TALKS ABOUT THE MOTION PICTURE PATENTS WAR OF 1911.



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"... OR BY BURNING DOWN OUR STUDIOS IF WE HAPPENED TO HAVE ONE."



"THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS MOST OF US WENT TO CALIFORNIA, AND TO DISTANT PLACES."



"THEY SENT GUNMEN OUT."



"WE WERE WATCHING THE DEPOT CONSTANTLY."



"ONE DAY A SNEAKY LOOKING CHARACTER GOT OFF THE TRAIN AND ASKED TO SEE THE BOSS."



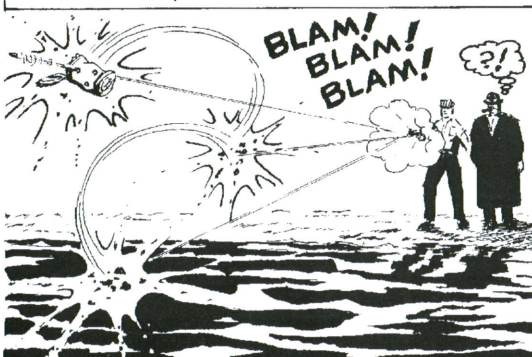
"WE WALKED UP THE ROAD ABOUT A MILE."



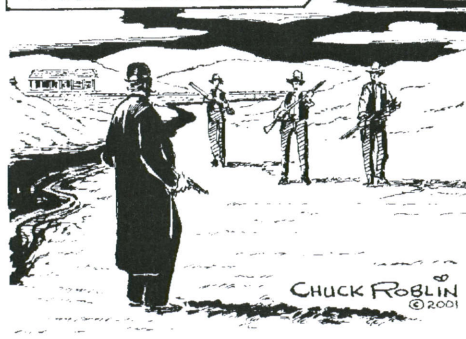
"TO IMPRESS ME, HE WHIPPED OUT A SIDE ARM AND FIRED AT ONE OF THE TIN CANS IN THE ARROYO."



"I WHIPPED MINE OUT AND FIRED. HE MISSED HIS, BUT I HIT MINE THREE TIMES."



"HE TURNED ROUND TOWARDS THE DEPOT AND RAN RIGHT INTO MY THREE COWBOYS."



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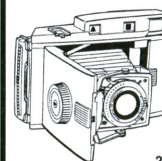
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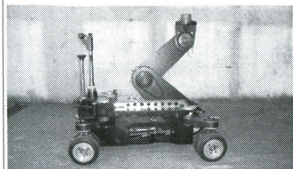
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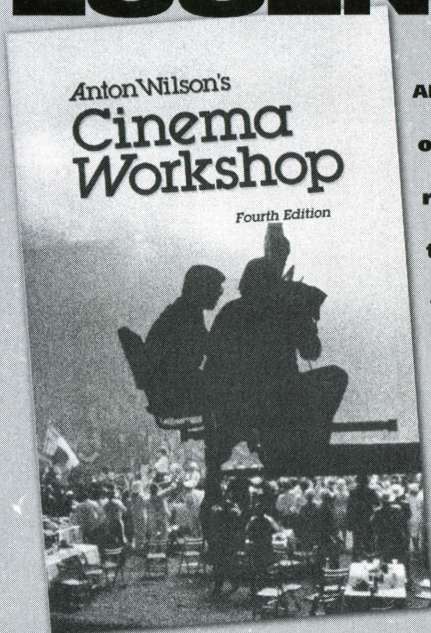
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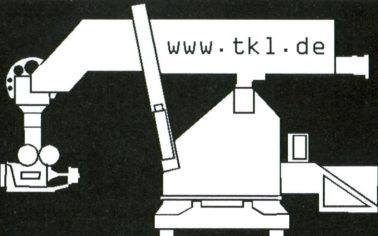
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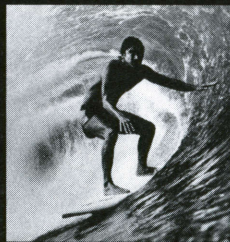
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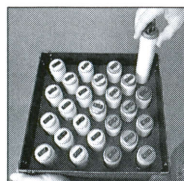
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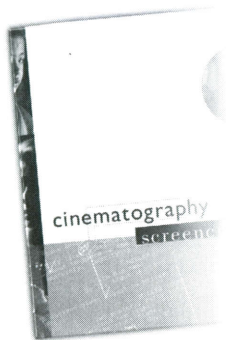


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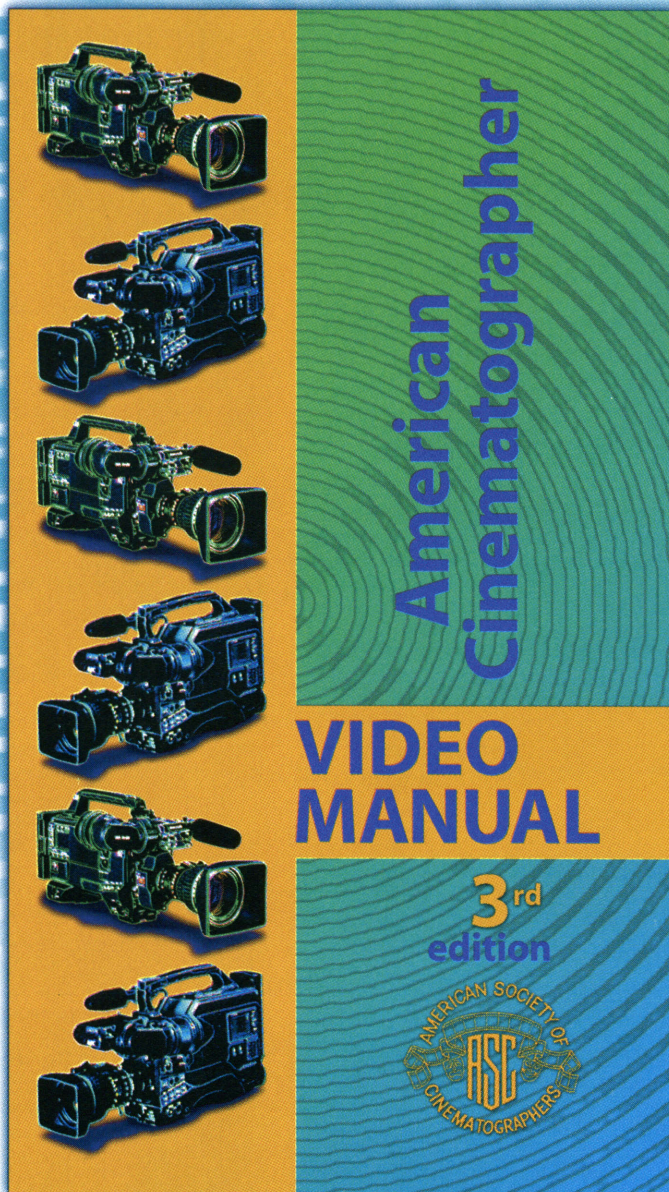
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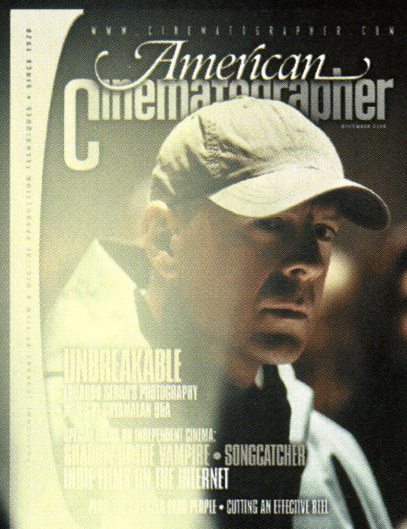
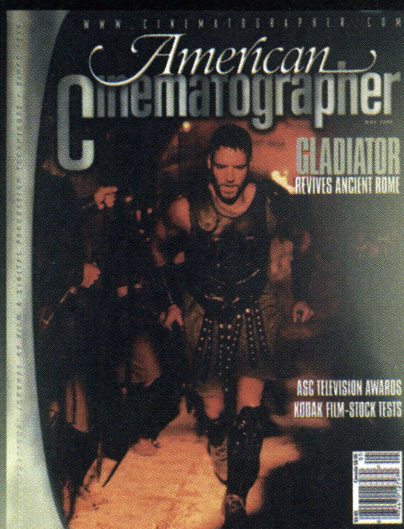
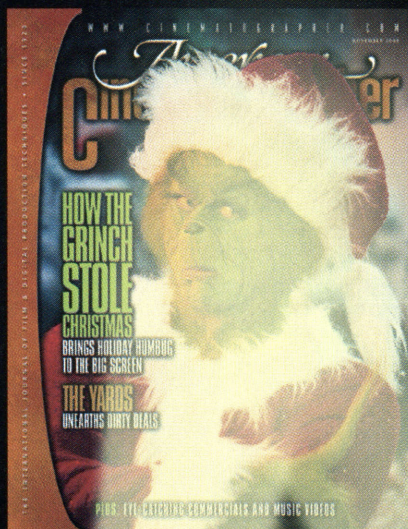
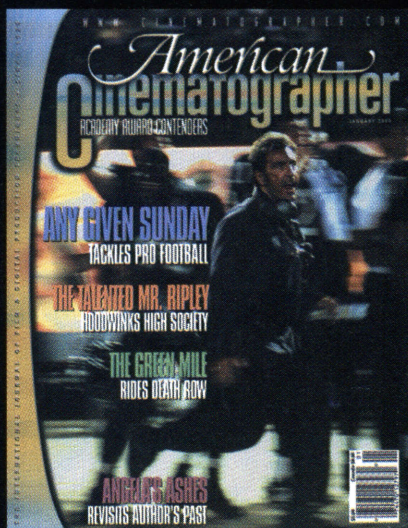
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From the Clubhouse



Cundey at UCLA

Dean Cundey, ASC recently served as Kodak Cinematographer in Residence at the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television. An alumnus of the school, Cundey taught a series of workshops focusing on the aesthetic role the cinematographer plays in visual storytelling and hosted screenings of three of his films.

The residency program, conceived by Prof. William McDonald, vice chair for production, is sponsored by the Kodak Worldwide Student Program. The Kodak Cinematographer in Residence is a component of the master of fine arts specialization in cinematography offered at the school.

"We believe it is essential for our students to have access to talented contemporary filmmakers who are defining the future of our industry," says McDonald. "Dean Cundey is one

of the most successful and influential cinematographers of our times. He is in the midst of creating an impressive body of work that is making an indelible impression on young filmmakers in every part of the world. All of our students, including writers, directors and cinematographers, will benefit from this program."

McDonald says that UCLA intends to appoint a new resident cinematographer annually to enrich the curriculum by giving students in-depth access to filmmakers who have made a seminal impact on advancing the art form. Last year, Allen Daviau, ASC completed a residency.

Says John Mason, manager of the Kodak Worldwide Student Program in the United States and Canada, "We are delighted that UCLA chose Dean Cundey and that he agreed to make time for this worthy endeavor. Dean is a bril-

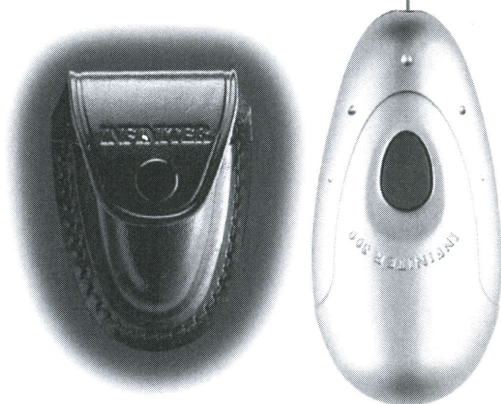
liant artist [and] a great mentor for these filmmakers who are still at a formative stage of their careers."

For more information, visit the UCLA Web site at www.tft.ucla.edu, or Kodak's Web site at www.kodak.com/go/motion.

ASC Members Receive CSC Awards

The Canadian Society of Cinematographers recently held its annual awards ceremony, and two ASC members were recognized. In the TV Drama category, **Bert Dunk, ASC, CSC** was nominated for his work on *Children of Fortune*. **John Bartley, ASC, CSC** took home the Kodak New Century Award for outstanding contribution to the art of cinematography. Among Bartley's credits is *The X-Files*, which he shot from 1993-1996. ■

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WRAP SHOT



Arthur (Steve Martin) and Eileen (Bernadette Peters) step into a classic Fred Astaire musical in this sequence from the innovative musical *Pennies From Heaven*, shot by Gordon Willis, ASC.

Prior to the December 1981 release of *Pennies From Heaven*, director Herbert Ross observed that “musicals are very problematic today ... [but] *Pennies From Heaven* has revitalized my vision of the [genre’s] possibilities.” Cinematographer Gordon Willis, ASC says he signed onto the project for similar reasons: “I was never interested in doing a musical in the MGM genre. This film offered a different framework, a different way that musical numbers could be staged and photographed.”

Pennies From Heaven originated as a BBC miniseries in 1978. The Depression-era story offers a dubious hero in Arthur Parker, a sheet-music salesman whose tawdry life falls far short of the cheery songs he sells and loves. Writer Dennis Potter was intrigued by the series’ big-screen potential, particularly when the idea was embraced by none other than MGM, home of the film musical. The film transposed his story’s setting to Chicago, and the period songs were framed as production numbers unfolding in the realm of fantasy, with actors lip-syncing to original recordings. Potter’s downbeat tale thus became a \$20-million showcase for Hollywood craftsmanship.

The production attracted top talent in virtually every department.

Willis had shot some of the most celebrated films of the Seventies, including *Klute*, *The Godfather* and *Manhattan*. Ross had directed two 1979 Best Picture nominees, *The Turning Point* and *The Goodbye Girl*. Production designer Ken Adam’s credits included *Dr. Strangelove* and *Barry Lyndon*. Ross cast Steve Martin as Arthur, and the limber comedian spent eight months rehearsing the dance numbers, succeeding so well that the pieces were expanded to suit his newfound expertise.

Principal photography began in January 1981 at MGM’s Culver City lot, which had last hosted an original MGM musical in 1955. *Pennies From Heaven* ultimately required 12 soundstages; its sets included a two-story bank interior measuring 40’ long x 50’ high, the setting for “Yes, Yes!,” a giddy fantasy Arthur entertains after he is denied a loan. Adam wanted to design sets with hard ceilings, but Willis talked him out of it. “You have a great deal more flexibility in lighting and shooting without ceilings,” Willis notes, “and this film in particular wasn’t suited to source lighting. The musical numbers come out of left field.” Those numbers range from the poignant (“*Pennies From Heaven*,” in which a driving rain becomes a shower of pennies) to the downright intimidating

(“Let’s Misbehave,” a dive-bar striptease performed by Christopher Walken).

The muted palette that characterizes Arthur’s reality was achieved with “simple lighting and the addition of a low-contrast filter, not a very heavy one,” Willis says. “Also key were the art direction and the colors chosen for the sets and wardrobe. Period work especially needs focus on color — *less is better*.” Ross also asked Willis to reference paintings by Edward Hopper and Reginald Marsh, sometimes explicitly. Hopper’s *Nighthawks*, for example, springs to life onscreen for Arthur’s reunion with Eileen (Bernadette Peters), whom he’d seduced and abandoned.

Willis is particularly happy with the sequence being filmed in this still, in which Arthur and Eileen literally step into the film musical *Follow the Fleet*. “That was done with front projection, and we needed quite a throw to get the screen size right,” he recalls. “Martin and Peters dancing [in front of the screen] in tandem with Astaire and Rogers was shot in color, whereas the part where they’re actually in the number was shot in black-and-white. The whole movie was ultimately printed on color stock, and there’s the rub: if the prints aren’t done well, you don’t get pure black-and-white as well as proper color.”

Critic Pauline Kael called *Pennies From Heaven* “the most emotional movie musical I’ve ever seen,” and in a field that included *Reds*, *Chariots of Fire* and *Ragtime*, the film earned Oscar nominations for adapted screenplay, costume design and sound. Willis won Best Cinematography awards from the National Society of Film Critics and the Boston Society of Film Critics. Unfortunately, the film never found an audience, finally earning just a fraction of what it had cost to make. “At least,” Ross said on the cusp of its release, “it’s an innovative way to start the Eighties.”

— Rachael K. Bosley

Photo courtesy of MGM.

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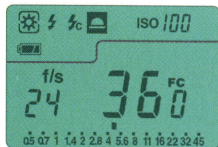
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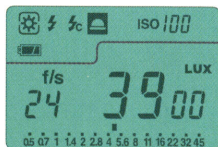
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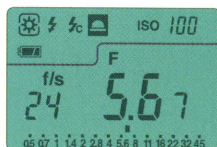
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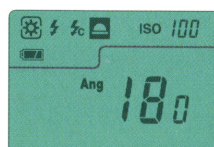
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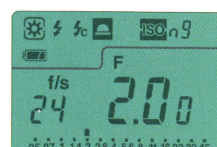
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